

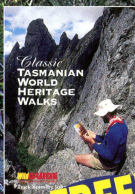
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Tim Macartney-Snape

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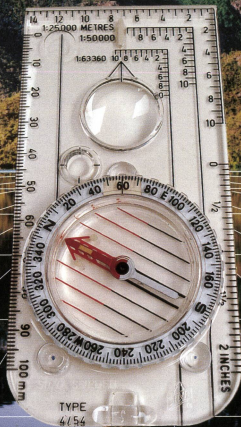
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Baying at the moon?

Wild
Established 1981

Autumn
(April-June)
2001,
issue 80
\$7.99* incl GST

* Maximum Australian recommended retail price only

Cover Sharyn George walking in Billywong Gorge, Victoria Range, Grampians, Victoria.
Michael Hampton

WARNING

The activities covered in this magazine are dangerous. Undertaking them without proper training, experience, skill, regard to safety, and equipment could result in serious injury or death.



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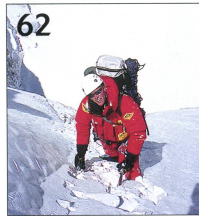
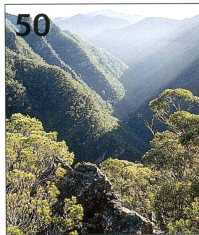
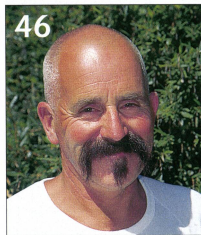
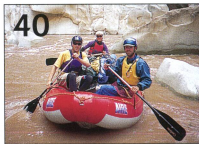
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Years in the wilderness

Reflections on 20 years of outdoors adventure and *Wild*

AS I SIT IN THE *WILD* OFFICE BUILDING writing this 20th anniversary Editorial reflection on Australia Day 2001, when much of the country is at play, I am struck by the contrast between the solitary nature of the effort that has been required for more than 20 years to produce the kind of magazine we want to publish, and the convivial bush fellowship which is so much part of the activities portrayed in *Wild*. I am also reminded of my extraordinary good fortune. My mother grew up on a remote Gippsland mountain property. Her lifelong love of this rugged, Victorian region was infectious. Similarly, my father enthralled me with stories of his extended walks in Victoria's Mt Howitt region in the 1940s. Both also shared a passion for the written word. (They gave unparalleled support during those frantic—but halcyon—first days of *Wild*. My father, an extremely experienced and senior advisor to public companies

Zealand. I also enjoyed the enormous benefit of having 'bush mentors' of the calibre of John Béchervaise and the strongest bushwalker I have met, Reg Williams. In those days wilderness was mostly empty and trackless; it was before the advent of specialised gear, an 'outdoors industry', ecotourism and recreational vehicles. Women were rarely seen in the bush.

idea' took years to develop and to nurture—as did the valuable and generous input of many people. Indeed, if anything, *Wild* today is more dependent on this remarkable contribution by many gifted, committed and energetic people than at any time in its long history.

It is these contacts, relationships, shared experiences and common goals that have given

Australian

Wild

bushwalking, ski touring
canoeing and climbing magazine

July/August/September (Winter) 1981 Vol 1 No 1

NZ \$2.25* **\$1.95***

'Every start upon an untrodden path is a venture which only in unusual circumstances looks sensible and likely to be successful.' Albert Schweitzer



The Wild team—a motley crew, if ever there was one: Naomi Peters (Editor, left), Fiona Sanders (Accounts), Tony Cox (Subscriptions), Emma Webb (Advertising Administration), Chris Baxter (Janitor & Boy Friday), Mary Harber (Sub-editor), Peta Coats (Manager), Rosie Johnson (Editorial Coordinator), Bruce Godden (Design & Production) and Lucy Monie (Sub-editor). Chris Baxter collection

Masthead from the first issue of *Wild*.

and to federal government enterprises, had taught me good business principles and practice for years. Then recently retired, he set up and ran the *Wild* subscription system [before the days of computers] until we could afford to pay someone to do it. For years my mother, a professional editor, performed that role, and others, for *Wild*, for the most part at a rate of payment lower than the job warranted. Both have died since our tenth anniversary issue.)

Introduced to the joys and beauty of the bush at a very young age, I was immediately smitten and was soon the keenest of the keen. Exciting family camping holidays in adventurously remote locations quickly led to full-on walks. By the time I was 15 I had done more bushwalking than some bushwalkers do in a lifetime. During my last teenage years rock-climbing had me in a vice-like grip that is still to be released, and before I turned 19 I had scared myself silly mountaineering in New

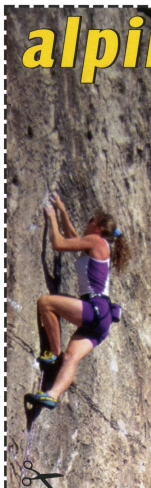
Zealand. Although the word 'conservation' was not in our lexicon, by the time I was 15 I felt and expressed grave concern at the twin threats of logging and the associated incursion of roads to the High Country.

However, it wasn't such plain sailing on the career front. After a few false starts—only much later seen as valuable 'practice runs'—I eventually came to the conclusion that my participation in the workforce was likely to be unsatisfactory for all concerned unless my job would comply with my passion for the rucksack sports and my interests in writing and photography, not to mention that it should also provide opportunities for the high level of self-reliance I had been taught to enjoy from my earliest days. Twenty-five years ago jobs of this kind were about as common as landmarks in a Bogong winter white-out, and in time I realised that such a position I would have to create for myself. It was not as simple as that, of course. The *Wild*

me the greatest pleasure and cause for celebration along the *Wild* way, a way frequently both steep and rough—and always demanding. Undoubtedly, the widely held and unwavering belief that *Wild* is both a worthy celebration of our wild places and an important means of protecting them has been largely responsible for the outstanding and readily forthcoming input from so many people. In particular, from the outset I have benefited enormously from the support of *Wild* co-founder and Wild Publications Director Brian Walters (see his

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Contributions, preferably well illustrated with disks, are welcome. *Guidelines for Contributors* are available on receipt of a stamped, addressed, business-size envelope. Whenever possible, written submissions should be supplied on a three-and-a-half-inch floppy disk in either IBM or Apple format. Please specify which format, program and version number. Hard copy should also be supplied. If not on disk, submissions should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of sheets of A4 paper.

Please ensure that submissions are accompanied by an envelope and sufficient postage.

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article starting on page 36) and, for almost as long, from that of fellow Wild Publications office-bearer, my wife Sue Baxter.

An important part of this shared experience has been the *Wild* staff. Readers may be surprised to learn that, with the exception of the start-up period, publishing *Wild* has never been more challenging than at present. Fortunately, however, *Wild*'s present staff—as a team—is the most able, energetic and committed in *Wild*'s history. And when you consider that past staff have included people of the calibre of co-founder Michael Collier (the original 'one-person army', if ever there was one), Stephen Hamilton, Glenn van der Kniff and Lachlan Drummond, that's saying something. All those people are male but, interestingly—and significantly—all current full-time staff are female, and young (Peta Coats, Rosie Johnson and Naomi Peters). Graphic artist Bruce Godden has been an unflappable *Wild* mainstay since 1988. Sub-editor Mary Harber has tidied up my Editorials—and, indeed, all *Wild*'s written content—for over a decade. While we all owe these remarkable people a debt of gratitude, my personal debt is, of course, by far the greatest.

Wild contributors don't come more loyal, long-standing or more prolific than the legendary guidebook author and publisher John Chapman. Sure, he's never been on time for an appointment (often being a week late) and has pinned back more than one pair of editorial ears with his relentless blather, but since *Wild* no 1 he has contributed far more material than anyone else (this latest *WildGUIDE* appears in this issue—and we have not dealt with a more obliging, good-natured and less mercenary contributor. But there has been a small army of outstanding writers and photographers who have given unstintingly of their work and have helped to make *Wild* the pre-eminent publication in its field. Quentin Chester is undoubtedly Australia's outstanding outdoors writer. His extraordinary prose has appeared regularly in *Wild* for many years. (See his article starting on page 25 in this issue.) And, of course, we have Grant Dixon, Michael Hampton, Geoff Law, Trevor Lewis, our David Noble, Glenn Tempest and many others who have contributed again and again.

The important role of *Wild*'s advertisers and our relationship with them is described in detail in the article starting on page 38. It will be obvious from that article that it has not always been a smooth ride. Indeed, some advertisers we have dealt with are not people with whom I'd choose to spend time. However, as Lachlan Drummond implies, most advertisers have been outstandingly loyal and fair-minded. Many of them have a love of wild places as strong as our own. They deserve our thanks for a contribution without which *Wild* would cease to exist. (Today's outdoors enthusiast is spoilt for choice, quality and value. He or she is rarely aware of the debt we owe the Australian outdoors industry; many of its members barely make a satisfactory living, let alone lavish profits.)

From before the first issue, *Wild* had decisively thrown in its lot with conservationists. In fact, the preservation of wild places is a fundamental plank of the *Wild* platform, its virtual *raison d'être*. We watched with bated breath as events unfolded on Tasmania's Frank-

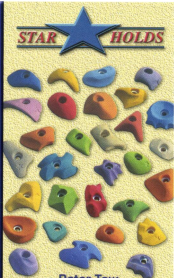
lin River during the Blockade, then reported them with a sense of triumph. (Only days before I wrote this Editorial it was announced that a government decision to excise Mt McKay from Victoria's Alpine National Park has been reversed.) We have identified with, and supported—both materially and editorially—those conservationists 'at the front'. We have been proud to work with and be inspired by the selfless commitment, passion and prodigious talent of conservation activists Karen Alexander, Bob Brown, Bob Burton, Jill Redwood—and numerous Wilderness Society campaigners over many years. We've shared their joy in many victories that have been achieved. (See Green Pages in this issue.) But we've also shared their frustration and pain at the losses, such as the untimely deaths of Peter Dombrowski, Milo Dunphy and Olegas Truchanas. Many readers have also shared our pain over the young Australasian mountaineers killed in Himalayan climbing accidents in the 1980s.

However, it would all be just so much shouting into the wind but for the readers; you! The loyalty and attachment of *Wild*'s readers is legendary. (Between a third and half of them are subscribers, many for more than two years in advance.) If you are very demanding, Pity help us if we fail to live up to your expectations. (The Wildlife pages positively bristle and bulge with high-explosive attacks on our perceived shortcomings—which commonly range from Editorials seen to have gone too far by being too outspoken, to Gear Surveys thought not to go far enough in emphasising the shortcomings of products reviewed.) Not many would accuse us of taking things too seriously. Indeed, we are constantly on the lookout for the quirky photo, and the opportunity for a bit of fun with a heading or photo caption. Sometimes, however, our readers tell us in no uncertain terms that we have overstepped the mark. We have even been accused of having a 'thing' about naked bottoms! The photo of the girl bending over a campfire and exposing her on page 29 of *Wild* no 22, in particular, stirred up something of a hornets' nest. Similarly, if we depict anything considered too gung-ho (such as the girl crossing the creek on the cover of issue 67), a veritable army of 'safety Nazis' will come out of the woodwork to admonish us for our irresponsibility!

Like good parents, our readers are firm but fair masters. It's up to us at *Wild* constantly to monitor their requirements and to ensure that we meet them. Steadfastly keeping this as our primary goal, at times despite considerable pressure from conflicting interests, largely explains why *Wild* is still with us today when so many other publications have fallen by the wayside. I have also derived great satisfaction—and ultimately even some benefit—from running an efficient business which is founded on strictly ethical principles. The passion, energy and commitment required to achieve this has at times seemed almost beyond us. Fortunately, it is a burden that many people have considered worth bearing. With the contribution of many such people in future, and by the grace of God, the celebration of wild places that is *Wild* will, we hope, continue—indeed flourish—over the next 20 years. ●

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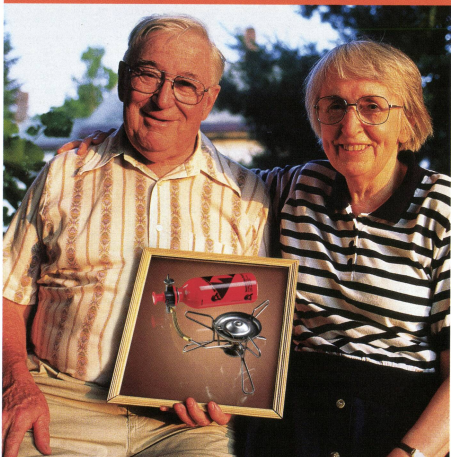
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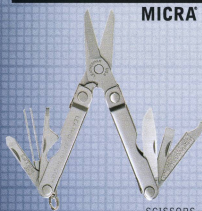


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Elitism, arrogance

An American perspective

I'VE BEEN GUIDING PEOPLE OF ALL SORTS

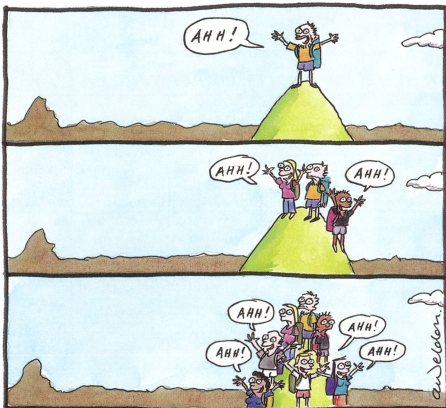
into the wilderness for over 30 years, all over the world. I've had the great good fortune to work with people of all kinds, including those with disabilities that would normally render many of these places inaccessible to them, people simply out of shape due to desk- or city-bound jobs or family commitments, and those who simply never had the opportunity to learn the necessary requirements for being safe in the 'wilderness'. Some, I will freely admit, did not appreciate it, enjoy it, or belong there. However, I remain proud and honoured to have been able to share Nature's glory and majesty with all.

I must admit to taking exception to the tone of your Editorial (*Wild* no 78). Your assertion that wilderness is not wilderness if it's accessible to everyone, except, like you [*This is the opposite to what the Editorial stated.* Editor], if they are 'fittest, bravest, and best prepared', seems elitist, arrogant...

The overcrowding I've seen since moving to the Victorian Alps, which I'd anticipated due to some others' comments, is nowhere near what it is in the USA, where 290 million people reside in the same area as all of Australia. That is why I'm here, I suppose, adding another of your 'thousand cuts'. And I suspect that while your population, like the rest of the world's, is increasing, it will thankfully be quite a while before it gets to anywhere near that obscene level. And I agree with your assessment that road development is one of the greatest culprits in the destruction of so-called wilderness. But rather than imply that only those blessed few with the strength, health, time, and means should be encouraged to experience wilderness, or that it should be set apart forever for them, I would propose another idea...

If people like you got together with Parks people, Natural Resources people, four-wheelers, loggers, and 'day-tripping ecotourists', and hammered out the issues, eventually, with some commitment, vision, and tenacity, a balance would surface where there would be a place for vehicles and golfers and handrails in the wilderness, mixed with 'pristine' places where the more rugged and able could avoid most traces of people. That way, a more diverse cross-section of folks could enjoy what may be the last places of solitude... Perhaps that shared experience could reduce the schism between so-called 'rabid, elitist environmentalists' and, well, everyone else, allowing some sort of cooperation and happier coexistence, not to mention saving a few more small pieces of 'wilderness'...

Jeffie Aronson
Anglers Rest, Vic



I agree whole-heartedly with Chris Baxter's Editorial in *Wild* no 78 ('Waving goodbye to wilderness'). The problem seems to be that today it is imperative for government to justify every decision on economic grounds, including the preservation of what wilderness we have left. This has led to increasing, if largely incremental, developments in National Parks which, as Mr Baxter so accurately put it, 'wring the neck of the goose that lays the golden eggs'. While environmentalists contend (fruitlessly) that wilderness should be preserved for its own sake, even under the government's own criteria there is a strong argument for keeping some areas wild and largely inaccessible.

There is undoubtedly a growing market in ecotourism, generated by people who until now have had little or no contact with the outdoors and desire to experience wilderness, and this should be encouraged. The mistake is to assume this necessitates opening up the wildest areas to tourist buses (thus destroying what makes them attractive in the first place).

Through developments over the last 200 years, there are many wild and spectacular areas which are already accessible by roads, four-wheel-drive tracks and easy walking paths. The answer lies, simply, in promotion. Take Victoria as an example. A couple of years ago the then State Government backed

a five-star hotel development at Wilsons Promontory. The development may have attracted some high-paying clients, but would have destroyed much of what makes the Prom one of Victoria's most popular National Parks. Meanwhile, similar accommodation already exists inside or adjacent to other National Parks in that State, such as Port Campbell, the Otways, Mt Buffalo and the Grampians. A development at Wilsons Prom would probably have succeeded in attracting only people who would have (or could have) visited these other areas, contributed the same amount of money to the State economy and found the same benefits, while wrecking the Prom for everybody else—including international backpackers, who bring a sizeable amount of money into the State, and who probably would have been driven off altogether.

People looking for contact with the natural world should be channelled into areas such as the Great Ocean Road and the Grampians, which are already geared for large tourist numbers, and where their presence is unlikely to ruin the experience for others.

Perhaps a national standard is needed, preserving, say, 50 per cent of all National Parks as undevelopable wilderness. But probably the easiest answer is to convince governments (and tourist developers) to promote

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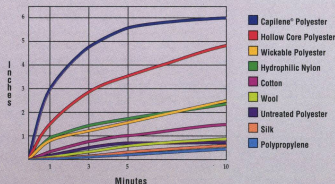
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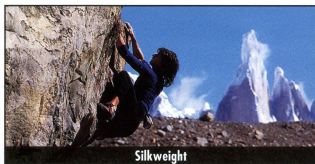
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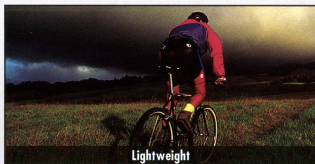


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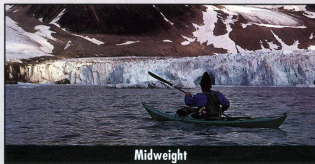
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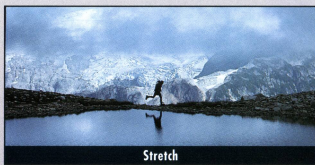
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different wild areas to different people. That way everyone wins: the mums and dads get their taste of wilderness, the hikers get their untamed wild areas to walk in, and (believe it or not) the economists might even get the numbers they like on their balance sheets.

Alistair Paton
Bendigo, Vic

Your Editorial in *Wild* no 78 is long overdue. Explorers, nature/wilderness lovers and like people have known for years that they were busy destroying what they were 'discovering' and publicising. Almost without exception, travel for non-military and non-commercial purposes has been financed by publicity (seeking), and generally the more the better. Even after tourism is well under way, there is an endless number of people seeking to fund or recoup their travel expenses by glorious or tantalising reports/writings about where they went...

The party is over. The absurdities can be stacked up *ad infinitum* (until humanity perishes). How many times around the world in a yacht 30 feet long, single-handed? How many times, etc in a yacht 29 feet 11 inches long? How many mountains...?

Your very own magazine must bear the blame, as you well understand, I am sure. Is your publication not a commercial venture? You love the wild. You publish a glossy mag. You need to pay bills. You advertise. You draw people into the wilderness, or such as it is. To get as many readers as possible, it must be made as attractive as possible. This is our culture. Walk into any major newsagent and you can see what is happening and why. Photography is art. Good photography can be beautiful, superb even. Yet it destroys that which is exposed until people wake up to their sickened mind-set. The ecologist, environmentalist, nature- and wilderness lover should know what to do. Expose people's sick minds on all fronts...

Jacob Jonker
E Perth, WA

Stove din

As a long-time reader I enjoy the articles and reviews in *Wild*. There is a worrying trend, however, in products for the outdoor industry so heavily advertised in the magazine. It is now widely recognised that the achievement of ecological and economic sustainability is the key priority for the conservation of the earth's resources, including the wild places featured in the magazine.

Though many of us are committed (or at least we say we are) to the concept that the earth's resources are limited and we need to reduce our consumption this does *Isic* come through in *Wild* content and particularly in your product reviews. It would be a great pity if *Wild* promoted only an emotional commitment to sustainability with-

out moving on to the practical application of sustainability principles.

To take but one example from a recent issue. Your review of lightweight stoves (*Wild* no 76) makes no comments on sustainability in ranking models against the various criteria chosen. Indeed, the one stove reviewed, which does use fuel from a renewable resource (the Trangia, using methylated spirits), received a poor rating for this very attribute! *Wild* could make a positive contribution to educating the outdoor community in applying sustainability

Wildfire

Australia's Going Wild

A stack of congratulations on the launching of *Wild*.

At last Australia has an in-tune adventure/environment sensitive magazine — excellent reading!

It took only a few pages to get the feeling that *Wild* is here to stay.

Callum McEachern
Blackwood, SA

Receiving our copy of *Wild* was like getting a letter from an old friend.

Sue Ferrari
O'Connor, ACT

... congratulations on an excellent production.

The content is varied and interesting and both typography and layout are executed with professionalism.

Peter Dombrovskis
Sandy Bay, Tas

Our first letters to the Editor, *Wildfire*, *Wild* no 2.

(including recycling) in product design and purchasing decisions if this was always included in product reviews as one of the key criteria in your reviews...

Maxine & Neville Esau
Mawson, ACT

The Trangia received a poor-average value rating because it is 'quite bulky, uses almost twice as much fuel as a Shellite/tero stove, has much lower power, has to be refilled rather frequently and has very basic flame control'. It did not receive a poor rating because it uses fuel from a renewable resource. Editor

It is refreshing to read an Editorial (*Wild* no 79) that highlights the benefits of lightweight walking.

Out with the boots, tents, stoves, expensive parkas, and so on. Where does that leave your advertisers?

Keep up the brave work!

Henry Berenson
(by email)

Anal sound

Must say you produce an excellent mag. Recently I was perusing issue 78 and found some enjoyable articles but also some disturbing ads. One that particularly jumps

to mind is on page 22, for River Mountain Guides. I'm not trying to sound anal with this, but in a game where there is so much unforeseen circumstance, you need to minimise the risk as much as you can. In this particular ad, three people are obviously jumping for joy. I know the feeling. I get that often in my outdoor pursuits, but being about two metres from a cliff-edge, on wet and uneven ground, would scare even the most hardy bushman (or bushperson, should I say)...

Another thing I can't stand when looking through outdoor mags (not just yours) or when I'm out in the bush (especially Tasmania) is when walkers have their closed-cell foam mattresses rolled up on the outside of their pack... Not only does the mat get wet, the surrounding bush picks at the mat until there are bits of closed-cell foam lying all along the track... How hard is it to put the mat in a nylon stuff sack? How much is a stuff sack compared to the damage a mat without one would cause?

Anyhow it's Sunday and I'm going to church. Rockclimbing in our beautiful bush, that sort of church!

Toby Hillier
Moonbi, NSW

Wild—wonderful

Thank you for a wonderful magazine—reader/collector/admirer since I saw issue one on the news-stand all those years ago.

Anthony Dillon Morley
(by email)

Hello, and thanks for a great magazine. It has been an inspiration for many great trips into the outdoors. I have tried my hand at a bit of writing and have enclosed a few ramblings on some great trips I have done over the last year...

Keep up the good work. *Wild* certainly knocks the opposition for six as regards quality of presentation and general feel for the Australian bush. Keep up the good work!

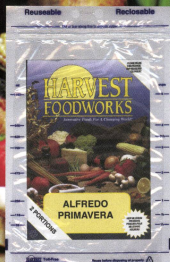
Stephen Wadsworth
Mallacoota, Vic

Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Pahrana, Vic 3181.

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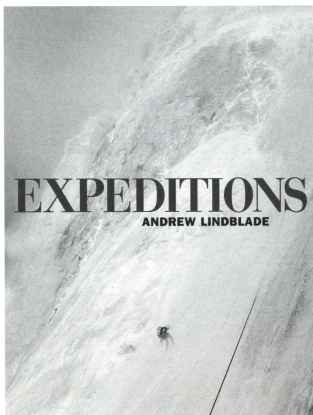
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Wayne Lawler/ECOPIX

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Barking Owl Frank Harrison/Nature focus



Feather-tailed Glider Adam Craven

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As timeless as this magnificent land may appear, your support for Australian Bush Heritage is critical now.



Northern Quoll Hans & Judy Bass/Nature focus

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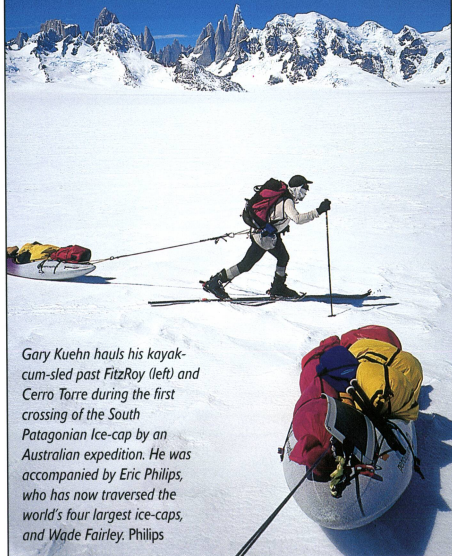


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Oz expedition crosses ice-cap



Gary Kuehn hauls his kayak-cum-sled past FitzRoy (left) and Cerro Torre during the first crossing of the South Patagonian Ice-cap by an Australian expedition. He was accompanied by Eric Philips, who has now traversed the world's four largest ice-caps, and Wade Fairley. Philips

Polar adventurer Eric Philips recently became the first person to traverse the world's four largest ice-caps when he and his team-mates crossed South America's South Patagonian Ice-cap from north to south. He has also crossed Ellesmere Island in northern Canada (see article in *Wild* no 55), Greenland (see Information, issue 59), and has skied to the Geographic South Pole (see Information, issue 72).

Mountain guide Gary Kuehn and adventure film-maker Wade Fairley accompanied Philips on the 25-day, 250 kilometre journey. In doing so, they became the first Australian expedition to cross the South Patagonian Ice-cap. (In 1977 David Neilson became the first Australian to cross the ice-cap; see his article in *Wild* no 76.)

In October 2000 the team set off for Chile's fiord-riven coast, laden with 300 kilo-

grams of food and equipment. At the base of a massive, broken glacier they hauled their belongings in kayak-cum-sleds up the steep and crevassed ice to the high plateau above. Here they launched steerable kites, called Quadrifoils, to take advantage of the region's notorious winds and make a unique, kite-assisted ski crossing of the South Patagonian Ice-cap. The traverse took them on to the high plateau summit—a narrow spine of ice that stretches south for more than 400 kilometres—the largest ice-cap outside the polar regions.

Once on the south-eastern flank of the ice-cap, the trio descended another glacier. After converting their sleds to kayaks, the three adventurers paddled a series of lakes that led to an unpaddled river, Rio Catalina, which they kayaked to the Argentine lake district.

Dalziel claims place among Oz endurance elite

Tasmanian Matt Dalziel won the 2000 Jones Lang LaSalle Challenge endurance event, held between Mt Buller in the Victorian Alps and Melbourne on 24–25 November. Thirty-year-old Dalziel, who came second in this event two years ago, completed the 231 kilometre run, cycle and paddle event



The UK's Karen Hopkinson in the Howqua River during the 2000 Jones Lang LaSalle Challenge endurance race from Mt Buller to Melbourne. She went on to win the event, making it two wins in two years. Jeff Crow

in 13 hours, 3 minutes and 54 seconds, more than 45 minutes clear of his nearest challenger, Ian Franzke. Brett Anderson was third, just 21 seconds behind.

In the women's event, the UK's Karen Hopkinson made it two wins in two years, crossing the line 2 hours and 22 minutes ahead of 1995 winner New Zealander Sharon Prutton, and placing tenth out of a field of 74 individuals. Kerryn Flett was third.

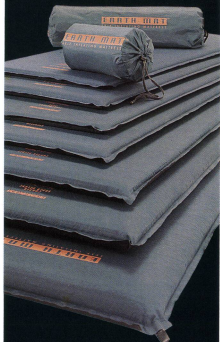
In the tri-teams event, Pro-motion Cycles took the honours; the stage-team win went to Lonely Planet.

Garry Ebbling

Stellar performance

Special Tasks and Rescue (STAR) force police from South Australia's Police Department won the inaugural 200 kilometre Southern Challenge adventure race near Adelaide in October 2000. The STAR team finished the race in just over 48 hours; a Metropolitan Fire Service team was the only other team to complete the course within the allotted time of 52 hours. The race started south of Adelaide and wound its way through the Mt Lofty Ranges and into the city centre. It consisted in sea and river kayaking, trek-

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In the Southern Challenge adventure race in South Australia, strong winds and large waves made it almost impossible to enter the mouth of the Onkaparinga River, so teams carried or pulled their kayaks into sheltered waters. Adrian Puust

king, rockclimbing, abseiling, mountain biking and running. Ten teams started in the event, which was open to defence force- and emergency-service personnel only.

Adrian Puust

Australian rainforest plant lovers

Hugh and Nan Nicholson, of The Channon in New South Wales, have recently self-published their fifth book in the Australian Rainforest Plants series. They informed us that the sales of the other four volumes total 100 000 copies, and they expect volume five to have similar appeal!

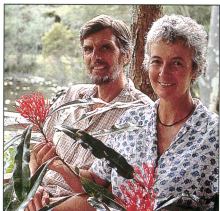
Australian Rainforest Plants V contains a further 114 species including trees, shrubs, ferns, vines and orchids. When combined with the first four volumes, over 530 species of plants from Australia's rainforest areas have been described and illustrated.

Volume five comprises plants ranging from the seasonally dry Kimberley region of Western Australia to the cool, wet Tasmanian forests. Most of the plants grow in the rainforests of the wet east coast of Queensland and northern NSW. Each one is illustrated with a colour photograph.

The Nicholsons became fascinated by the rainforests of the north coast of New South Wales when they moved there more than 25 years ago. They were horrified by the devastation wrought by the logging of these forests. The two were active in the protracted fight to prevent the logging of their local rainforest. This culminated in the battle for Terania Creek in 1979 which ultimately led to many of NSW's rainforests being declared National Parks. Two years later Hugh's photographs helped the campaign for these forests to become World Heritage Reserves.

In addition to opposing the wholesale logging of rainforest and its conversion to eucalypt plantation, the Nicholsons started a nursery, pioneering the growing of rainforest plants. For 20 years they supplied plants to other nurseries. Further, they encouraged landowners to reforest their degraded land with appropriate rainforest species. (Rainforest plants are far more suited to cultivation in the gardens of eastern Australia than the more conventional native plants from the drier inland regions.)

In their attempts to understand the complexity of the forests, the Nicholsons were faced with the lack of interesting reference books for identifying rainforest plants, so Hugh began to photograph the flowers and fruits as he collected seed for the nursery. Eventually the first volume of *Australian Rainforest Plants* was published. It was so well received, and the need for more coverage so obvious, that the Nicholsons continued to photograph and grow all rainforest



Hugh and Nan Nicholson have recently self-published their fifth book in the Australian Rainforest Plants series. They produced the first book in the series after finding that few interesting books on this subject were available. Sarah Buckley

species they came across to increase their knowledge. Further volumes appeared every three years.

The knowledge gained from their years of nursery work comes out in a section at the back of *Australian Rainforest Plants V*, which explains the seed ecology of rainforest plants—how and why seeds are dispersed and germinated.

The Nicholsons sold the nursery five years ago. They now make their living from sales of their books, from farming and from botanical consulting.

S C R O G G I N

✦ Katrina Coleman reports that the **Tasmanian Government** has made available **30 personal locator beacons for hire by bushwalkers** under a six-month trial. Initial feasibility studies sug-

A marathon effort



Blisters and body cramps were the most common complaints from paddlers with injuries in the 2000 Red Cross-Herald Sun Murray Marathon, which began in Yarrawonga and finished in Swan Hill. Ryan Gormly

A kayaker who had recently recovered from breaking his neck won the Single Kayak Men's Open division in the 2000 Red Cross-Herald Sun Murray Marathon. Tim Naughtin broke his neck in training 18 months before the event. 'It was my goal to get back on my feet and into shape by the Murray Marathon 2000', he said.

First home with line honours were Rod Clark and Tony Bond in the Double Canoe Men's 40+ section. They crossed the line at 12.50 pm, beating the 1992 record for the final leg by 17 minutes.

Anthony May and Michael Leverett won the Double Kayak Men's Open class after

leading throughout the marathon. The Leaver Landscapes team, who also led throughout the marathon, held off two other competitive teams to win the Single Kayak Red Cross-Herald Sun Cup by 12 minutes.

The 32-year-old race, which begins in Yarrawonga and finishes in Swan Hill, attracted 810 competitors. In 2000 the race raised \$250 000 for the Red Cross. The day-two route was cancelled due to flooding in the checkpoints, hence the day-one leg had to be done twice; the total distance kayaked was 404 kilometres. Very strong head winds prevailed each day.

gested sufficient interest in the beacons to undergo the trial. Beacons can be hired from the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, the Mt Field National Park, or the National Parks office in Hobart. The beacons cost \$10 to hire, and photo identification will be required.

Also of interest to bushwalkers in Tasmania is a new brochure, 'Tasmania's Great Short Walks', which promotes 30 walks around Tasmania. Telephone 1800 806 846 to obtain a free copy.

❖ The **Pump 'n' Pedals Cairns Eco Adventure Race 2001** will be held between **20 and 22 July**. This year's race will be split into two divisions and a solo competitor category will be introduced. Division 1 and 2 entrants will cover about 300 and 150 kilometres, respectively. Disciplines will comprise mountain biking, running, hiking, canoeing and climbing. Extra disciplines will include rappelling (controlled rope descent) and orienteering (division 1), and wading (division 2). Entries close on 9 July; phone (07) 4093 8808.

❖ Three generations of the **Bell-McCullough family** won the Family Trophy

in the **Canberra Cross-Country Ski Club Kosciusko Tour**, held between the top of Thredbo's Crackenback Chairlift and Perisher on 10 September 2000. (Andrew McCullough was born in 1927, David Bell in 1960 and Patrick Bell in 1989.) The first skier across the line was **Chris Darlington** in 45 minutes and 28 seconds. **Camille Melvey** was the first woman home in 51 minutes and 54 seconds. The Army team won the Interservice Trophy, and Boonoonna was the fastest Club Team.

❖ The **Lemonthyme Lodge Triple Top Mountain Run** was run over Mts Claude, Van Dyke and Roland near Sheffield in north-west Tasmania on 19 November 2000. Organised by the Lions Club of Kentish, the 18.3 kilometre event attracted a record field of 116 competitors. **Tim Sloan** of Hobart won in 2 hours, 4 minutes and 57 seconds (5 minutes outside the record). A highlight was the outstanding run by **Helen Diamantides**, an experienced hill- and distance runner from Scotland, who came third in 2 hours, 19 minutes and 56 seconds. 🏆

Corrections and amplifications

On page 20 of *Wild* no 79 the phone number given in the Star Holds ad was incorrect; it is (02) 9294 7766.

In the synthetic sleeping-bags survey in the same issue we stated: 'Du Pont produces the widely used Quallofil, now in its seventh version...'. According to Du Pont, Quallofil is *not* in its seventh version. Further, Du Pont no longer uses the figure '7' when referring to Quallofil.

The same survey states that the total weight given for all sleeping-bags 'is the weight of the sleeping-bag when it is packed to be carried, including stuff sacks'. Snuggpak tells us that the total weights supplied for its bags do not include stuff sacks.

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

Wild Diary

Wild Diary listings provide information about rucksack-sports events and instruction courses run by non-commercial organisations. Send items for publication to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

March

17 6-hr Metrogene **R** SA (08) 8271 2712
6-hr **R**/9-hr triaine (bike/canoe/foot) Vic (03) 9438 6626

April

1 6-hr **R** ACT (02) 6247 5334
7 8-hr **R** Qld (07) 3351 6563
6/12-hr **R** Vic (03) 9438 6626
Autumn 12-hr **R** WA (08) 9342 9213
7-8 12/24-hr **R** NSW (02) 9990 3480

May

5 6/12-hr **R** Qld (07) 4093 9553
5-6 24-hr ACT Champs **R** ACT (02) 6247 5334
12/24-hr AUMC/SARA **R** SA (08) 8271 2712
24-hr **R** Vic (03) 9438 6626
13 Metrogene **R** Qld (07) 3351 6563
25-27 Oxden Trailwalker 100 kilometre B NSW (02) 8204 3900

June

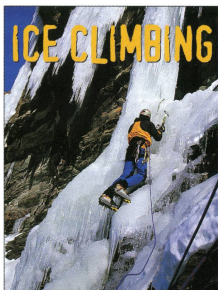
2-3 24-hr Rock and Roll **R** NT (08) 8948 1187
24-hr WA Champs **R** WA (08) 9342 9213
9-11 NSWBC instructors' re-qualification workshop (Barrington Tops) **C** NSW (02) 6558 4316
16-17 2 x 6-hr Schools/Venturer challenge **R** Vic (03) 9438 6626

17 6-hr **R** NSW (02) 9990 3480
30 6/12-hr **R** Qld (07) 3351 6563

July

7 6/12-hr SA Champs **R** Qld (07) 4093 9553
7-8 24-hr SA Champs **R** SA (08) 8271 2712
20-22 Pump 'n' Pedals Cairns Eco Adventure Race 2001 **M** Qld (07) 4093 8808

Activities: **B** bushwalking, **C** canoeing, **M** multisports, **R** rogaining, **RC** rockclimbing, **S** skiing
Organisations: **AUMC** Adelaide University Mountaineering Club, **NSWBC** New South Wales Board of Canoe Education, **SARA** South Australian Rogaining Association. **Rogaining events** are organised by the State rogaining associations.



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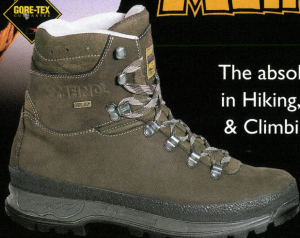


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Risky business

Quentin Chester on the merits and pitfalls of taking risks

You can get it walking a track. You can get it hauling a sack. You can get it burning the chow. Matter of fact, I've got it now. When things go from bad to worse you need some ice-cold fear. And the best cold fear comes from risk.

THE 'NOW' OF WHICH I SPEAK WAS MY recent confrontation with a small buttress. This brutish lump of stone barred my progress along an outback gorge. The sensible thing would have been to walk high on to the ridge and skirt round it. Instead, I decided to chance my arm—both of them in fact.

So I found myself hanging by my pinkies to some rounded handholds. Below was a 12 metre drop to a dark pool with sharp rocks just below the surface. After several

I begin to snarl and sprout hair on the back of my hands. It must have something to do with the crud that builds up from all the day-to-day stuff of making ends meet and pretending to belong to polite society.

After many weeks things at home were going from bad to worse. Faced with such a malaise some people gamble their savings or go on a drinking binge. My approach is to find a scenic spot for some minor jeopardy. It sounds like a paradox but I find incidents of personal danger necessary for my health.

Nothing too grave, of course. In this regard I was lucky to have had a few early experiences to put a brake on my swollen sense of invincibility. In one of these I was rockclimbing unroped in Morialta Gorge

'What amounts to little more than a few mates getting together for a climbing holiday in the Himalayas becomes a mission to "keep Australia's spirit of adventure alive".'

moments of sweaty panic I groped across to some more holds and easier ground. Then I just sat there watching dragonflies and enjoying my small triumph.

This prank is hardly going to earn me a place in the daredevils' hall of fame. Nevertheless, it was a manoeuvre with potentially dire consequences. The nearest medical help was three hours of serious, off-road driving away. Had I come unstuck it would have been a messy rescue with helicopters, paramedics and a gruff, local police sergeant doing a piece on camera for the 6 pm news: 'The injured person was lucky to survive this unfortunate incident. We in the force cannot condone this kind of irresponsible conduct by members of the general public.'

So why did I do it? Well, the simple answer is that old habits die hard. For me, an element of risk has always been a vital part of being let loose in the bush. Until my affair with the buttress, the trip in question had been a fairly sedate affair with family and friends. After a couple of tame days of walking I was feeling edgy.

More to the point, this was my first decent trip away for two or three months. As I've come to realise, that is about my limit. Any longer without a fresh-air fix and

near Adelaide, I was hauling up a steep wall when, at 15 metres above the deck, the sharp flake around which my right hand was clasped parted company from the wall. I followed suit. There wasn't any blood-curdling scream of terror, just a banal, slow-motion realisation that, yes, I was airborne. I looked down to see my mate Ed standing on the ground, his arms outstretched in a plaintive gesture of support. By a stroke of providence I landed on a steep, grassy slope, and was able to hobble away with nothing more than a sprained ankle.

By surviving such trials you sort out a personal threshold of risk. I discovered a major cut-off point during my one and only season climbing in the New Zealand Alps. After a couple of months' mooching about Mt Cook I realised that the glittering world of mountaineering wasn't for me.

I climbed a few minor peaks and enjoyed the alpine spectacle but I couldn't help feeling uneasy about the whole deal. The problem

Richard Flanagan pushing the envelope on the aptly named Suicide Falls in Tasmania. Matthew Newton





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was the variety of stuff outside my control: the erratic weather with surly clouds rolling in from the Tasman Sea, the threat of avalanches and crevasses, plus the unnerving sight of rocks ping-pong off the ridge above your head.

Things came to a head on a gentle climb of the Footstool, a snowy knoll near Mt Sefton. We made it to the top, took the obligatory snaps and slurped from our Sigg bottles. Then on the way down the three of us were carried away by a snow slide. Nothing too serious but being roped together meant that we careered 100 metres down the mountain in a tangle of limbs, crampons and ice-axes. Two days later I was on the next bus out of the village.

As it happened our trio included my brother Jonathan, who developed a very different risk threshold from mine. He'd cut his teeth—or at least those of his ice-axe—on Scottish gullies and rime-filled Chamonix cracks. That same season in New Zealand, he and John Fantini climbed Mt Cook's Caroline Face and for the next decade or so I had a brother who led a go-for-it, gypsy, life. A self-confessed adrenalin junkie, he travelled the world in search of high summits and high sensations.

Risk taking can indeed have a drug-like quality. And being scared is only part of it. Those who court dangerous situations cultivate an intimacy with the physical and emotional hazards involved. While the final outcome might be uncertain, the process of working through the risks—with all the minutiae of problem solving—often generates a surprising feeling of power, if not control. The concentration of mind and body on the task at hand creates a different version of reality. Everything feels acute and distilled and, in the aftermath of the 'crisis', there comes a spilling euphoria.

Given such mental states—fuelled by high-octane body chemistry—it is no wonder that people get addicted. You might be pushed to the limit, yet there remains the illusion of being the master of your destiny—a feeling that is hard to sustain in the swim of everyday affairs. (It's interesting to note the number of hot-shot skiers and hardened climbers who confess that the most difficult thing they've ever done was not tackling a mountain but surviving the first year of parenthood or another plague of office politics.)

In the face of such incessant realities, the ultimate pitfall of risk taking is not the possibility of physical harm, but the temptation to let it consume your life. I know quite a few characters who are wedded to taking risks. While careers and relationships flounder they chase their next big challenge, pursuing a headlong love affair with their near nightmares.

Risk is seductive. Moreover, because the stakes are high, extreme adventure is wide open to hype and distortion. What is an elaborate form of play is dramatised as a 'life and death struggle'. While I can admire desperadoes who climb an exotic Tibetan peak or paddle some raging stretch of Amazonian headwaters, I'm not sure that they automatically qualify as heroes. Oh yes, marvel at their wonderful skills. By all

means celebrate their grit and pluck. But have they really made the world a better place?

I'm intrigued by the way some people try to give risk an air of lofty importance. So we are treated to expeditions that wrap themselves in a flag as big as a bed sheet. What amounts to little more than a few mates getting together for a climbing holiday in the Himalayas becomes a mission to 'keep Australia's spirit of adventure alive'. How noble of you to have such a good time on our behalf!

It's a short hop from this kind of thing to claims that our glorious adventurers will promote world peace or end the famine in

over a wooden skeleton, this craft appeared flimsy when beached. But, as Rob explained, it was extremely seaworthy. They used them a lot during the war', he said. 'In fact, a bloke has paddled one across the Atlantic.' As we pushed through the Bass Strait swell I had to admit that our craft did remarkably stable in the water. Then Rob hit me with the bad news. They only have one real drawback', he said. 'They're not so good in a shark attack.'

I didn't panic straight away. In fact, after several minutes of calm discussion it was agreed that the likelihood of being visited by a shark was extremely remote. But in the silence that followed, my addled brain began to rack up more probable scenarios. For starters we were heading into one of the country's most notorious stretches of water, paddling a flimsy craft with limited supplies and without any means of contacting the outside world. In addition, this was the first time in many years that I'd set foot in a canoe of any kind and I was a tad hazy about what to do in the event of a capsizing.

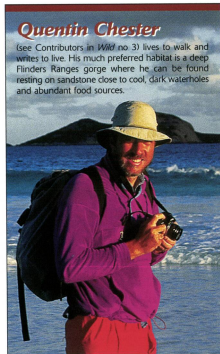
There's nothing like a few frightening prospects to hone one's responses. The days of paddling and island hopping that followed went without a hitch. Yet I remained in a state of exhilarated vigilance. Somehow I've managed to get by with a faith in this ability to rise to the occasion. It's sufficiently easy, however, to get carried away and suddenly find risk staring at you from a great height, as I discovered some time ago on a walk in the Barrington Tops in New South Wales.

It was a big day out with a long ridge climb through mighty eucalypts and lush beech forest to the high plateau. The three of us—my partner Dale, friend Peter and I—were in good spirits. By mid-afternoon we were on our way down, rejoicing in the splendour of tall timber and blithely drifting along with idle conversation. However, as layers of evening shadow fell over us, it gradually became obvious that we had taken a wrong turn.

After a brief discussion we decided to retrace our steps. It was a mild night and we were confident of eventually finding the right track. The only problem was that Dale seemed to be running out of puff. This was quite understandable given that she was six months pregnant. For three hours we stumbled slowly off the mountain, pausing often in the gathering darkness to let Dale rest and to ease her pains. It was the most anxious descent I've ever done.

We survived the ordeal and at the end of that summer our first girl was born. Vivacious and bright-eyed, she has kept her parents on their toes ever since. I am sure that that night in the forest on Barrington Tops changed us all. But I'm also relieved to say that our girls climb trees and their old man still scrambles around waterholes. As paternal as I might feel, it seems to me that one of the biggest risks of all is protecting people from themselves. ●

Quentin Chester



Quentin Chester

See Contributors in *Wild* no 31 lives to walk and writes to live. His much preferred habitat is a deep firsides Ranges gorge where he can be found resting on sandstone close to cool, dark waterholes and abundant food sources.

Somalia or some other place by clambering to a summit or bobbing down a wild river. It smacks of the old charity lark where a bunch of rich people spend up big on a bash. At the end of it all, they toss a bit of parking-meter change at some 'worthy' cause to save their consciences.

By contrast, my bias is for haphazards, the kind of perils that creep on you. You see, I belong to the ignorance-is-bliss school of risk taking. In essence, I con somebody else to come with me to some remote or obscure place and 'see what happens'. Instead of planning meticulously for months I spend the night before departure realising that I'll have to make do with the old maps and tatty gear that have been gathering dust at the bottom of the wardrobe.

Such was the case a few years ago, when Rob Jung and I kayaked out to Great Glenie Island off Wilsons Promontory in Victoria. We paddled away from Tidal River, buoyed by the anticipation of a week on a deserted island. It wasn't until we were a couple of kilometres offshore that I got an attack of the 'what ifs'.

Rob had been extolling the virtues of the Klepper, our two-person, collapsible kayak. With its rubberised canvas skin stretched

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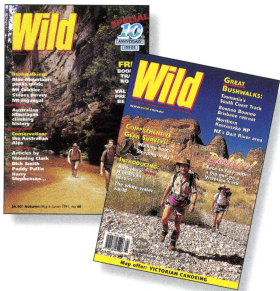
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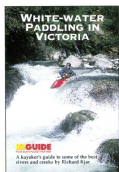
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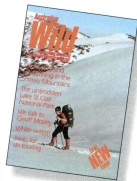
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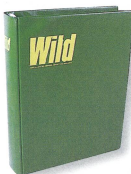
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High Achievers

Australian Himalayan mountaineering since 1994, by Zac Zaharias

AUSTRALIANS HAVE CLIMBED IN THE HIMALAYAS in ever-increasing numbers since 1994 (when the most recent *Wild* review was published) with a developing trend towards commercial climbing. Of the 57 expeditions covered in this survey, more than 30 are to 8000 metre peaks. There have been ten attempts on Mt Everest with nine Australians reaching the summit, five of whom were guided. Many of the 8000ers received first Australian ascents during this period including Makalu (8481 metres), Lhotse (8511 metres), Dhaulagiri (8167 metres), Gasherbrum I (8068 metres) and Nanga Parbat (8125 metres). (Previous Australian Himalayan climbing reviews were published in *Wild* nos 55 and 40.)

Andrew Lock emerged as a climber with impressive achievements during this period with ascents of Mt Everest (8850 metres), Dhaulagiri, Broad Peak (8047 metres), Nanga Parbat, Gasherbrum I, and Gasherbrum II (8035 metres). He has climbed seven 8000 metre peaks, more than any other Australian.

Lock's ascent of Broad Peak epitomises his style of being lightweight and audacious. In 1994 he reached the fore-summit, only an hour short of the true summit. Undeterred by his near miss he returned in 1997 after climbing Dhaulagiri. He attempted a new route on the South Ridge with Rick Allen (UK) but was turned back at 7100 metres by technical difficulties. Lock then soloed the West Ridge, reaching the summit in poor conditions at 6 pm, bivvying just below the top in fierce conditions before retreating to Base Camp. The two-and-a-half day ascent was done as a true solo climb without any other person on the mountain and all ropes buried. Lock later admitted that Broad Peak was the most demanding climb of his career.

Mike Groom (see profile in *Rock* no 34) continued his quest to climb the big six

with a lightweight ascent of Lhotse by way of the West Face with Finn Veikka Gustafsson in 1995. In 1996 Groom was caught up in the tragedy that unfolded on Mt Everest when eight people died in a severe storm. He was the only surviving guide of Rob Hall's expedition and his account of the tragedy is in his book *Sheer Will*. Groom finally achieved his ambition with an ascent of Makalu in 1999.

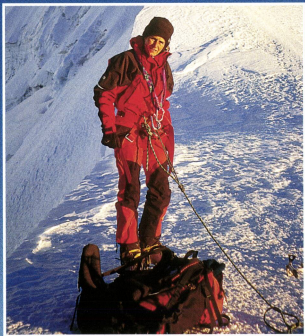
Brigitte Muir (see profile of Jon and Brigitte Muir in *Wild* no 50) also achieved a long-held ambition by reaching the summit of Mt Everest in 1997 on her fourth attempt, making her the first Australian woman to do so and also becoming the first Australian to climb the highest summit on each continent. On Everest in 1995 she was forced back after headtorch failure at 8500 metres. In

Right, Flying the flag: Brian Laursen (left), Andrew Lock, Matt Rogerson and Zac Zaharias at Base Camp after a successful ascent of Dhaulagiri (8167 metres), Nepal. Martin Banfield. **Far right**, Sue Fear has emerged as one of Australia's most successful high-altitude mountaineers. Fear collection

Text continues on page 35.

With four summits hovering around the magical 8000 metre mark, the Gasherbrums (seen here from Broad Peak [8047 metres] in Pakistan's Karakoram Range), are among the most sought-after high mountains in the world and have seen a number of Australian ascents. Zac Zaharias





Wild Survey Australian Himalayan Climbs

Year	Peak, route	Party members	Outcome	Comments
1994	Kwange Ri (6187 m) S Ridge Nepal	Gareth Brown, David Chauval, Matt Godbold, Paul Morton, Matt Rogerson and Matt Walton	Summit reached by Chauval, Godbold and Rogerson	Army Alpine Association (AAA) expedition. First Australian ascent
	Pumori (7165 m) S Ridge Nepal	John Barnes (NZ), Grant Dixon, Rolan Eberhard, Stuart Findlay (UK), Hamish Morton (UK) and Wade Stevens	Barnes and Findlay reached summit on 22 October. Dixon, Eberhard and Stevens reached 6700 m	
	Ama Dablam (6854 m) S Ridge and SW Ridge Nepal	Andrew Burns, Armando Corvini (leader), Andrew McAuley, David Smith (UK), Rod Willard (USA) and Vera Wong	Successful. McAuley, Willard and Wong reached summit on 8 November. Burns, Corvini and Smith reached summit two days later	First Australian ascent of this route. Corvini lost all fingers and some toes to frostbite. Three others with frostbite
	Kusum Kanguru SE Face (6369 m) Nepal	Alan Adams and David Gardner	Climbed a direct line from the Lungsamba Glacier. Reached summit ridge just east of summit	
1995	Makalu (8481 m) NW Ridge (French) Nepal	Mark Auricht, Duncan Chessell, David Hume, Paul Rickards, Matt Rolfe and David Tingay	Auricht and Hume reached summit on 8 May. Hume died during the descent from a fall 250 m below the summit	First Australian ascent. Auricht descended alone in the dark
	Mt Everest (8850 m) N Ridge, Tibet	George Mallory II, member of US expedition	Reached summit on 14 May	Second Australian ascent of N Ridge. Grandson of George Mallory
	Mt Everest (8850 m) N Ridge Tibet	Greg Child on Russell Brice (NZ) Himalayan Experience expedition	Child reached summit	Tom Whittaker (USA) attempted to make first disabled ascent of Everest. He reached 8300 m
	Mt Everest (8850 m) N Ridge Tibet	James Allen, Kelly Armitage, Mick Chapman (UK), Brigitte Muir, Jon Muir, and other members of OTT commercial expedition led by Jon Tinker (UK)	Allen reached summit on 27 May. Brigitte Muir reached 8500 m but headtorch failure forced an all-night open bivvy at 8450 m	Guided ascent by Allen (22), who became the youngest Australian to climb Everest. Jon Muir's fifth expedition to Mt Everest. Muir's attempt unguided
	*Cho Oyu (8201 m), Tibet	P Walters	Ascended on 29 May	
	Lhotse (8511 m) W Face, Nepal	Mike Groom and Veikka Gustafsson (Finland)	Groom and Gustafsson reached summit	First Australian ascent
	*Shisha Pangma (Central Summit) (8024 m), N Ridge Tibet	Mike Groom	Turned back at 7600 m due to slab avalanches	
	Tirich Mir (7707 m) N Face Hindu Kush Pakistan	Semi-commercial expedition led by David Hamilton (UK) and consisting of Grant Dixon, Rob Levy, four Britons and one Canadian	Dixon and Hamilton reached summit on 17 July	First Australian ascent
	Nanda Devi East (7437 m) India	David Chauval, Jim Truscott, Chris White and 80 members of international expedition consisting of Indian, Nepalese, Australian, British and US Army climbers	Truscott and White reached summit. US climber fell to his death during descent	First Australian ascent of Nanda Devi East and eighth overall ascent
	Bublimotin (6000 m), Pakistan	Damien Gildea and Mark Nayar	Reached 4700 m	
	Kusum Kanguru (6369 m) N Buttress, Nepal	Chris Matthews and Matt Rogerson	High point of 5600 m reached. Climb abandoned due to poor snow conditions	Alpine-style attempt. AAA expedition
	Nanga Parbat (8125 m) Mazeno Ridge Pakistan	Sandy Allan (UK), Rick Allen (UK), Voytek Kurtyka (Poland), Andrew Lock and Doug Scott (UK)	Allen, Kurtyka and Lock made it about halfway along the ridge before turning around due to lack of food and time	The furthest any attempt has reached on the long ridge
	Khurdopin (6465 m) Pakistan	Members of the Edith Cowan Mountaineering Club	Three members reached 5650 m	Dangerous conditions and severely corniced ridge forced retreat
	Tenan Tower (5300 m) Hushoh Puk (5400 m) Nangmar Couloir Pakistan	Kynan Bazley (NZ) and Vera Wong	Summit of Tenan Tower reached by way of 550 m, 11-pitch rock route. New route on Hushoh Puk by way of couloir but summit not reached	First ascent of Tenan Tower
	*Cho Oyu (8201 m), Tibet	L Harvey and R Rosenbaum	Ascended on 26 September	
1996	Pyramid Peak (Pathibhara) (7125 m) W (S) Ridge Nepal	Jon Chapman, Gavin Dunmall, Tim Evans, Morvan Grant, Darren Miller (leader), James Serle, Nicola Sunderland and Scott Welch	Chapman and Dunmall reached 6350 m. Abandoned climb due to strong winds and poor weather	Mountain had only one previous ascent from Sikkim side. No ascent yet from Nepalese side
	Mt Everest (8850 m) S Col Nepal	Mike Groom, John Taske and members of Adventure Consultants commercial expedition led by Rob Hall (NZ)	Groom reached summit. His second ascent of Mt Everest	The 1996 tragedy is documented in Jon Krakauer's book <i>Into Thin Air</i> . Groom was the only guide to survive the tragedy
	Mt Everest (8850 m) S Col Nepal	Brigitte Muir on Henry Todd (UK) Himalayan Guides commercial expedition (non-guided attempt)	Muir reached S Col. Spent two nights during storm that caught out Rob Hall's expedition. Attempt abandoned due to unstable weather	Muir assisted Beck Weathers off S Col

Wild Survey Australian Himalayan Climbs continued

Year	Peak, route	Party members	Outcome	Comments
	Nanga Parbat (8125 m) Diamir Face Pakistan	Joan Garcia (Portugal) and Andrew Lock on international expedition including six Poles and one Austrian	Garcia and Lock reached 7500 m. Stopped by bad conditions	Poles abandoned mountain and took most of the gear while Lock was still on mountain
	Thalay Sagar (6904 m) N Face India	Andrew Lindblade and Athol Whimp (NZ)	Lindblade and Whimp reached 6350 m. Climb abandoned due to cold, snow and avalanche	Attempt of direct route on 2000 m N Face
1997	Mt Everest (8850 m) S Col, Nepal	Tashi Tenzing on commercial expedition	Reached summit on 23 May	First grandson of any summiteer. Guided ascent
	Mt Everest (8850 m) S Col Nepal	Brigitte Muir on Mal Duff (UK) non-guided commercial expedition	Muir reached summit on 27 May with Dorje Sherpa and Kipa-Sherpa during perfect weather using oxygen	First Australian female (unguided) ascent. First Australian husband-and-wife summiters (Jon Muir, 28 May 1988)
	Dhaulagiri (8167 m) NE Spur Nepal	Nevin Agnew, Allen Caldwell, Bob Killip, Brian Laursen, Andrew Lock, Andrew Molyneux, Matt Rogerson, Jon Sparks, Alex van Roy, Matt Walton and Zac Zaharias (leader)	Successful. Lock, Rogerson and Zaharias reached summit in the dark at 9.30 pm on 25 May	First Australian ascent of Dhaulagiri. Dual AAA expedition to Dhaulagiri and Tukuiche
	Tukuiche (6940 m) and Tukuiche South (6690 m) S Ridge Nepal	Lindsay Adams, Martin Banfield, Robb Clifton, Mike Cook, David Donaldson, Jamie Hackett, Andrea Jopp-McKay, David McKay, David Smith and Alex van Roy (leader)	South summit reached on 3 May by Hackett and van Roy and on 4 May by Adams, Clifton, Cook, Donaldson, Jopp-McKay and McKay. Unable to continue to main summit due to difficult conditions	AAA expedition. First Australian expedition to Tukuiche and first Australian ascent of S peak
	Cho Oyu (8201 m) Tibet	Geoff Robb on OTT expedition	Unsuccessful. Robb reached 7000 m but abandoned climb due to chest cold	Billy Pearson (USA) and George Kurtov (Russia) from team climb new route on N Ridge
	Broad Peak (8047 m) S Ridge and W Face Pakistan	Rick Allen (UK) and Andrew Lock	Allen and Lock reached 7100 m attempting new route on S Ridge, climbing higher than any previous attempts. Lock later soloed W Ridge	Second Australian ascent of Broad Peak. Lock was first Australian to climb two 8000 m peaks in one year
	Thalay Sagar (6904 m) N Face India	Andrew Lindblade and Athol Whimp (NZ)	Lindblade and Whimp reached summit	First ascent of N Face direct and first Australian ascent of this peak. This route previously defeated ten other expeditions
	Shivling (6543 m) W Ridge Gangotri, India	John Barnes (NZ), Stuart Findlay (UK), Chris Grasswick (Canada) and Wade Stevens	Route out of condition, climb abandoned	
	Cho Oyu (8201 m) Tibet	Alan Silva, member of international commercial expedition	Reached summit	
	Makalu II (7680 m) NW Ridge, Nepal	Sue Fear, Matt Gregory and John Maraz	Fear, Gregory and Maraz reached summit	First Australian ascent
1998	Shisha Pangma (Central Summit) (8024 m) N Ridge Tibet	Brian Agnew, Simon Blackmore (UK), Ansj de Boer (NZ), Peter Hunt, Ralph Pliner, Geoff Robb and Zac Zaharias on Mountain Works commercial expedition led by Mark Whetu (NZ)	Successful. de Boer, Pliner, Robb and Whetu reached Central Summit on 20 May	Pliner and Robb guided ascent. Pliner suffered frostbite to his fingers
	Mt Everest (8850 m) S Col, Nepal	Alan Silva, member of international commercial expedition	Reached summit on 26 May after climbing alone from S Col	
	Gasherbrum II (8035 m) Pakistan	RF Brown and P Walters	Ascended on 9 July	
	Cho Oyu (8201 m) NW Face Tibet	Sue Fear and Nima Dorje Tamang (Nepal)	Fear and Nima Dorje reached summit on 24 September	First Australian female ascent of Cho Oyu and second Australian woman to summit an 8000 m peak
	Pumori (7165 m) SW Ridge Nepal	Kynan Bazley (NZ), Scott Ferris, Chris Grasswick (Canada), Matthew Jones, John Kelsall, Theo Kossart (leader) and Philip Suisted (NZ)	Successful. Bazley, Ferris and Suisted reached summit on 7 October; Grasswick and Kossart reached summit on 9 October	Kelsall and Jones both got very sick
	Nanga Parbat (8125 m) Kinshofer Route Pakistan	Alan Hinks (UK) and Andrew Lock	Lock successful. Bivvied on the descent, around 7500 m while his companions left him	First Australian ascent
	Changi Tower (5820 m) and Marpo Brakk (5400 m) Hushe Valley Pakistan	Ned Norton (NZ), Abby Watkins, Paul Weber (NZ), Vera Wong and Nicola Woolford (NZ)	Watkins, Wong and Woolford reached summit of Marpo Brakk by way of 300 m aid line (grade-20 crux) and Changi Tower Main Peak. N summit of Changi Tower climbed by Norton and Weber	First ascent of E summit of Marpo Brakk. First ascent of Changi Tower Main Peak

Wild Survey Australian Himalayan Climbs continued

Year	Peak, route	Party members	Outcome	Comments
	Ama Dablam (6854 m) SW Ridge Nepal	Mark Auricht, Duncan Chessell, Lorne McClurg, Adele Pennington (UK) and David Wilshe	Auricht and Chessell reached summit on 5 December with Pennington and Wilshe on summit the next day	Second Australian winter ascent
1999	Makalu (8481 m) French Spur Nepal	Australian-US expedition with David Bridges (USA), Mike Groom and Lincoln Hall	Bridges and Groom reached summit on 16 May	Second Australian ascent of Makalu. Groom climbs his sixth 8000er and has now reached the summit of the six highest mountains in the world
	Makalu (8481 m) French Spur Nepal	International Makalu expedition members included Ginette Harrison (UK), Brigitte Muir, Gary Pfisterer (USA; leader), Billy Pierson (USA), Hamish Robertson and seven other climbers	Harrison and Robertson reached summit at 6 pm on 23 May. Muir reached 7600 m; abandoned attempt after death of a close friend, Michael Joergensen (Denmark), who was on another expedition on Makalu	Third Australian ascent of Makalu
	Shisha Pangma (Central Summit) (8024 m) N Ridge Tibet	Brian Agnew (leader), Tanya Bylart, Allen Caldwell, Mike Cook, David Donaldson, Steve Graham, Jamie Hackett, Carl Johnson, Bob Killip, Shane Lacey, Peter Lambert, Brian Laursen, Adrian McCallum, Dean McMaster, Andrew Peacock, Brad Reeve, Tim Robathan, Steve Simpson, Stuart Sugden and Zac Zaharias	Successful. Agnew, Bylart, Caldwell, Cook, Donaldson, Graham, Hackett, Johnson, Killip, Lambert, Laursen, McMaster, Peacock, Reeve, Robathan, Simpson and Zaharias reached summit over four days from 25 to 28 May	World record of 17 climbers on the summit of an 8000 m (subsidiary) peak from one expedition. A US and an Italian climber rescued by the team in two separate incidents. Bylart was third Australian woman to summit an 8000 m peak. Robathan (21) was youngest Australian to summit an 8000 m peak
	Mt Everest (8850 m) N Ridge Nepal	Geoff Robb on Himalayan Experience commercial expedition led by Russell Brice (NZ) with five clients and five Sherpas	Successful. Reached summit on 27 May	
	Gasherbrum I (8068 m) and Gasherbrum II (8035 m) Pakistan	Abele Blanc (Italy), Pepe Garces (Spain), Christian Kunter (Italy), Andrew Lock and Waldemar Niklevic (Brazil)	Alpine-style ascent by Lock on G2 with Garces, a return trip of three days after acclimatising and working on G1. Lock then reached summit of G1	First Australian ascent of Gasherbrum I. Lock was first Australian to climb two 8000 m peaks in one season
	Dhaulagiri (8167 m) NE Spur, Nepal	P Walters	Reached summit	Second Australian ascent
	Kedarnath (6968 m) Gangotri, India	Glen Sharrock (leader)	Reached 6800 m. Abandoned attempt due to weather	
	Kusum Kanguru (6369 m) N Face Nepal	Brede Arkless (NZ), Duncan Chessell and David Ritchie (UK)	Chessell and Ritchie completed route to summit ridge between W and high summits	Bivvied on summit ridge. Complete alpine-style ascent of face
	Island Peak (6189 m, Imja Tse), S Ridge, Nepal	Duncan Chessell	Chessell reached summit on a possible new route	Solo ascent
	Ama Dablam (6854 m) SW Ridge, Nepal	Duncan Chessell guiding on US commercial expedition	Chessell and four out of five clients reached summit	Chessell's second ascent of Ama Dablam and third Australian winter ascent
2000	Cho Oyu (8201 m) NW Face Tibet	Allen Caldwell, Matt Godbold, Roger Grose (leader), Bob Killip, Brian Laursen, Mick McCourt, Adam Scott, Matt Shepley, Stuart Sugden and Matt Walton	Successful. Grose and Laursen reached summit on 16 May, Shepley on 17 May. All other members reached 7500 m	AAA expedition
	Cho Oyu (8201 m) NW Face Tibet	Duncan Chessell guiding on US commercial expedition with Malte Hagge and others	Chessell and Hagge reached summit with two Sherpas	Hagge guided ascent
	Mt Everest (8850 m) S Ridge Nepal	Andrew Lock, leader of Jagged Globe commercial expedition	Lock reached S summit on 16 May and reached summit on 24 May with two other members	First successful Australian leader of a commercial expedition to Everest. His seventh 8000 m peak
	Jannu (7710 m) N Face, Nepal	Andrew Lindblade and Athol Whimp (NZ)	Lindblade and Whimp reached summit	Lightweight-style ascent of N Face—Wall of Shadows
	Shisha Pangma (Central Summit) (8024 m) N Ridge, Tibet	Colin Chaplin, Sue Fear, Ian Hibbert and Nawang Jimba Sherpa	Chaplin and Fear abandoned climb at 7400 m after Nawang suffered pulmonary oedema	Fear dragged Nawang down from Camp Three to Camp One, where he recovered

* Indicates insufficient or incomplete information.

This table includes all successful Australian ascents of significant Himalayan peaks (generally considered to be above 5500 metres), but only the first Australian ascents of 'trekking peaks' in Nepal. It also includes near misses on major Himalayan peaks, and other unsuccessful attempts which are considered noteworthy for any reason (for example, technical difficulty, unclimbed peak, death). Peaks successfully climbed (by Australians) are indicated in **bold**. Where possible, differentiation is made between those reaching a summit as clients on commercial expeditions and those who participate on a commercial expedition but in an unguided capacity. Climbers of other nationalities have only been listed when they are notable, have done something of interest or are guides.

Sources: *The American Alpine Journal*, Himalayan Club Newsletters, *Himalayan Journal*, *New Zealand Alpine Journal*, *Rock, Wild, The Climber* (NZ), *On Top of the World* by Richard Sale & John Cleare, *Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer, *Sheer Will* by Mike Groom, AAA Post Expedition Reports, Duncan Chessell, Armando Corvini, Sue Fear, Roger Grose, Paul Hudson, Matt Jones, Theo Kossart, Andrew Lock, Darren Miller, Brigitte Muir, Jon Muir, Geoff Robb, Wade Stevens, Matt Walton and Margaret Werner.

1996 she was on the South Col as the tragedy unfolded around her and she subsequently assisted Beck Weathers down. The following year her tenacity was finally rewarded with a glorious summit day. Makalu was her last foray to the Himalayas, in 1999; although climbing strongly to 7600 metres, she abandoned her climb after the death of a close friend, Michael Joergensen (Denmark).

The Army Alpine Association continued its successful forays in the Himalayas with

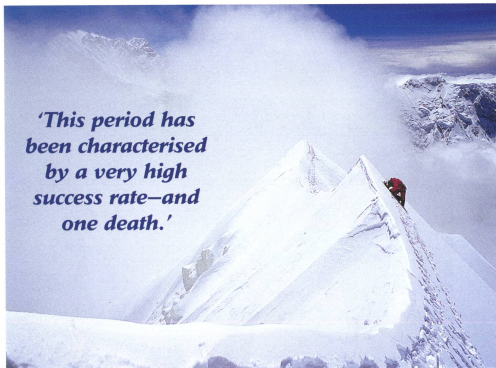
mit was an outstanding achievement on this difficult 8000er. Auricht and Duncan Chessell, members of that expedition, subsequently returned to Ama Dablam (6854 metres) in 1998, making the second Australian winter ascent in fine style. Chessell has continued, mixing guiding with private climbing, reaching the summits of Cho Oyu (8201 metres) and Ama Dablam in winter for the second time.

Women have been playing a more prominent role in the Himalayas. In 1994 Vera

Tirich Mir (7707 metres; see article in *Rock* no 25), the highest mountain in the Hindu Kush, near the Afghanistan border. This region is less popular but just as impressive as the Karakoram. Darren Miller continued his tradition of testing mountaineers' geographical knowledge by gaining access to restricted mountains. His team attempted Pyramid Peak (7125 metres) in east Nepal by the West Ridge. It was a strong attempt on a difficult route but was thwarted by strong winds. Jon Chapman and Gavin

Dunmall achieved a high point of 6350 metres.

While many Australians have focused on the more popular trade routes, two climbers emerged at the end of this decade as being world-class. Andrew Lindblade and New Zealander Athol Whimp (see profile of the pair starting on page 62) have combined their superb technical skill on rock and ice and applied it to big walls at altitude. They burst on to the scene in 1996 with a bold attempt on the steep, technical North Face of Thalay Sagar (6904 metres; see article in *Wild* no 64), but were defeated by cold and frostbite. The following year they returned to the North Face, which had previously defeated ten other expeditions, and made the first ascent (see article in *Rock* no 33). In 2000 they climbed in alpine style the infamous Wall of Shadows on Jannu's (7710 metres) North Face, a deeply committing route, by way of a more direct line than that



'This period has been characterised by a very high success rate—and one death.'

Andrew Lindblade fighting exhaustion on the summit ridge of Jannu (7710 metres), Nepal, after a two-man ascent of the North Face. Athol Whimp

eight major expeditions, seven of which reached the summit, developing many military climbers in the process. Matt Rogerson and Brian Laursen have emerged as young climbers with talent. Rogerson, along with Lock and Zac Zaharias, made the first Australian ascent of Dhaulagiri (see article in *Rock* no 35), reaching the top at 9.30 pm. Jim Truscott and Chris White climbed Nanda Devi East (7437 metres) on a complex and difficult international military expedition. Equally impressive was a world record of 17 climbers reaching the summit of an 8000 metre peak on Shisha Pangma Central (8024 metres) in 1999, rescuing two climbers along the way.

This period has been characterised by a very high success rate—and one death. This may be attributed to a combination of greater experience among Australian climbers and the popularity of some of the climbs. Clearly, with many teams working the same route, the sharing of the leading and fixing ropes ensures greater overall safety.

Sad to say, the only death was of David Hume, leader of the 1995 Makalu Expedition, from a fall 250 metres below the summit while descending with Mark Auricht. (See article in *Rock* no 31.) Reaching the sum-

mit (see profile in *Rock* no 25) climbed Ama Dablam on Armando Corvini's expedition. The ascent by way of the South Ridge was the first by Australians on this route. She returned in 1995 to Pakistan and in 1998 with Abby Watkins and a team of New Zealanders, making impressive ascents of peaks such as Changi Tower (5820 metres; see article in *Rock* no 40) and Marpo Brakk (5400 metres), entailing steep and sustained free- and aid climbing.

Sue Fear (see profile in *Wild* no 74) arrived on the climbing scene in 1997 on Makalu II (7680 metres), making the first Australian ascent. She followed this in 1998 with an ascent of Cho Oyu with a Sherpa companion, thereby making only the second Australian ascent of an 8000 metre peak by a woman. Climbing in small groups, Fear has had to face many tough situations and none more so than that on her recent attempt on Shisha Pangma (8046 metres). At 7400 metres a Sherpa team member contracted pulmonary oedema. Fear spent the next few days dragging him down to Camp One, where he recovered.

Not all climbing has been on well-known peaks. Grant Dixon and Rob Levy climbed

Zac Zaharias,

a founding member of the Army Alpine Association, has been climbing for 25 years. His most memorable expedition was to Broad Peak in 1986 during which the team ran out of food on the walk in, survived a porter strike, reached the summit, rescued Kurt Diemberger from K2 and ran out of money.



taken by the New Zealanders in 1975. (See article in *Rock* no 45.)

At the end of the millennium Australian Himalayan climbing is very healthy. Its sheer volume, diversity and depth augurs well for the future. While the big mountains will always continue to attract the bulk of climbers, more mountaineers are sampling the joys of remoter and rarely travelled regions. 🏔️

How Wild Started

Co-founder *Brian Walters* recalls a dream brought to fruition

AFTER THREE DAYS OF BLIZZARD—DURING which we were restricted to Cope Hut near Falls Creek, Victoria—the weather dawned fine and clear. Michael Collie, our friend Tinecke Jaeger and I set out at first light to cross the Bogong High Plains to Tawonga Huts. Conditions were perfect. We sizzled across a firm base, showering sparkling crystals as we flew through trackless snow. As we glided down to the huts, the sun shone through trees laden with white powder.

It was 1980, when ski-touring was practised by only a few enthusiasts. We wore woollen army pants and a motley of warm clothing. Gore-Tex had just come on the market, but oiled japaras still prevailed.

We set ourselves up in a rat-infested hut, and made for the Niggerheads and some great skiing down gullies from the summit—some of the most thrilling skiing I can remember—laughing, whooping, tumbling, the sun shining. It was a glorious afternoon.

Back at camp we were gathering firewood when Chris Baxter and his partner Francine Giffedder skied in. Michael, already a keen rockclimber, recognised Chris, and there was an immediate rapport. Chris was then one of the best-known rockclimbers in Australia. We shared food and stories. Chris is a notable raconteur, and we were mesmerised by his tales, everything from rockclimbing, to a famous lawyer who, when offered thanks in the form of an expensive watch, pulled out a drawerful of such watches.

No one can be more obsessed with the task at hand than Michael. I remember that he went to great lengths, including climbing trees, to obtain dry fuel for our fire and I followed his enthusiastic lead. We were glad that we'd had a glorious day of skiing after being cooped up for three days, and we were delighted to meet Chris.

For Michael and me, then in our 20s, Chris was a hero about whom we had often read. We wanted to impress him—and he was impressed. It was as though we were new and more substantial people when we were with him. He really seemed to value our contributions. It was an incredibly energising association.

Michael and I loved the Alps. With another friend we had planned to produce a book about them, but in the end those plans were overtaken by *Wild*.

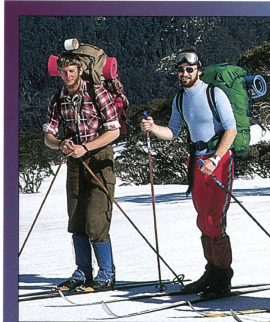
Chris had already been working on *Rock* for some time, and Michael, a graphic design student, offered to help him. *Rock* was then the annual journal of the Victorian Climbing Club, and it was produced by volunteers.

The next day we teamed up with Chris and Francine to make the trip to Mt Fainter under lowering clouds. We felt that it was an important accomplishment when we

reached the summit, the Christmas cake of Mt Feathertop under snow just across the Kiewa valley. We scussed down the peak and back to the huts.

That night we joined a group in the other hut which included Quentin Chester (see his regular column starting on page 25), whom I then met for the first time. I remember climbing stories being exchanged,

at Swinburne College in Hawthorn where he was studying graphic design. It was a Sunday. We wandered straight into his working area, and were looking at his posters with interest when a surly security officer told us to leave. We explained that we were there to pick up our friend, a graphics student, but for some reason this particularly infuriated him. His rage just enabled him to spit out



'Then.' Wild founding fathers meet for the first time: Michael Collie (left), Brian Walters and Chris Baxter, Bogong High Plains, Victoria, September 1980. Chris Baxter collection

and the shared delight of green ginger wine (in a Sigg bottle) that was handed around.

In glorious weather the next morning we left with Chris and Francine for a trip to Mt Jim and Mt Cope, from where they would head back to Falls Creek while we rejoined other friends at Cope Hut.

I remember skiing off Mt Jim, which was covered in ice, and rattling and clattering along for hundreds of metres (without poling) after hitting the plains, my knees bouncing and my heart thumping as I sped across ice formations as hard as concrete.

Some months later, when Chris and Michael had collaborated on an issue of *Rock*, Michael told me that an important project was being hatched. He and Chris arranged to spend a week at my home in Bairnsdale, in eastern Victoria, to develop it. But I was not told what the project was.

Having arranged to travel together from Melbourne, Chris and I picked Michael up

that we could either leave now, or with a police escort. We have always been equal to a challenge of this kind. We left.

When Michael finally joined us we headed to Bairnsdale, and on the way Chris's ideas for a wilderness magazine began to tumble out. I was sworn to the strictest secrecy. My heart leaped. This was exactly what I wanted to be a part of. I remember asking, quite early in the conversation, what the magazine was to be called. Chris said he wasn't quite sure but that they were thinking about 'High and Wild'. I felt that this was too clumsy, and the simplicity of the name 'Wild' jumped out at me. I did not say anything.

The conversation continued. Chris asked me what I thought about the project. I expressed my enthusiasm although perhaps in a guarded way (I was a careful lad), and said with a trembling earnestness (I was already excited about my idea) that I didn't like the name.

'I sort of gathered that', said Chris. 'What would you call it?'

'Why not just call it "Wild"? I asked. I expected that they would have thought of this and had discarded it. Perhaps someone else had already registered the name? But I secretly hoped that this would be seen as something new and exciting.

If I do say so myself—and it remains a golden memory for me—the effect of this suggestion was electrifying. Chris even suggested turning the car round there and then to go back and register the name. With the name chosen, we poured out excited ideas about the project.

That week I was at work as a solicitor while Michael and Chris went climbing during the day (they called one new climb 'Police Escort' in honour of the security guard). In the evenings we developed *Wild*. We talked about

project would proceed and that it would be a great success. It was the confidence of innocence perhaps, but it simply never struck us that others would not feel as excited about *Wild* as we did. We needed that confidence to carry us through many difficulties which lay ahead.

Over the ensuing months I rang Chris (and Michael, who was working with Chris in the front room of Chris's home in the inner Melbourne suburb of Prahran) every day. I longed to be there with them, but had to be content with the daily input from a distance.

We produced a flyer which showed the first cover on one side and gave details of the magazine on the other. We were shameless in promoting these flyers. We put them under the windshield wipers of cars at popular bushwalking areas such as at the bottom of Bungallow Spur leading up to Mt Feathertop. I think

When *Wild* was founded, Brian Walters was a Bairnsdale solicitor. In 1982 he moved to Melbourne, where he practises as a barrister. He married Sally Polmear in 1985 and has two daughters, Rachel and Georgia. The whole family loves to go bushwalking. Brian rafted Tasmania's Franklin River, joined the Blockade in 1982–83 and has taken part in various conservation issues since then including work on appropriate protection of the Victorian Alps, forest conservation and issues such as Basslink. He has provided legal and other assistance to a number of environmental causes. At present he is working on defamation law reform and on an environmental centre for Gippsland. He wants to see an end to all native-forest logging in Australia, and to have Tasmania's Lake Pedder restored to its full glory.

Wild founding Editor Chris Baxter has been humping nucksacks in high and remote places since his early teens. Among his fondest bush memories are trips in the company of *Wild* co-founder Brian Walters to some of the little-known peaks in Victoria's East Gippsland. He has continued to indulge a 40-year



'Now.' Michael (left), Chris and Brian in the Grampians, Victoria. Michael Collie collection

'We were obsessed. We thought each other's ideas were brilliant. Every one of us brought out the best in the others.'

ethical policies, worked out how it would look, discussed the audience, fine-tuned it. It was one of the most creative weeks we three ever spent. We were obsessed. We thought each other's ideas were brilliant. Every one of us brought out the best in the others.

That period of reflection and creative inspiration was pivotal in the formation of *Wild*. To this day we frequently return to things discussed and dealt with during that week. The text of the flyer we drafted then continues to be inspirational for the *Wild* staff.

At the end of that week I had some annual leave due, and I drove to Melbourne with the others before heading for the South Coast Track in Tasmania. The rugged setting was wonderful for pondering this new magazine to celebrate wild places. In the airport lounge afterwards I wrote an account of the trip which we published in the third issue.

Looking back, I am struck by one thing. We never doubted even for an instant that the

that I posted or gave them to all my friends. We sought out almost anyone who might be interested, with an energy borne of true enthusiasm. From all our efforts we obtained sufficient advance subscriptions to enable us to pay much of the first printer's bill.

I received my first copy of *Wild* on my birthday in 1981. The excitement I felt about the magazine—the minute savouring of each page and photograph—is a magnificent memory. I lived in a country town at the time, and proceeded to badger nearly everyone I knew into subscribing. I can remember stopping even remote acquaintances in the main street of Bairnsdale and urging them to subscribe. Looking back at this conduct, it surprises me how many did!

Wild has been Chris's baby at all times, and his energy and initiative over a long period has kept his vision alive.

I am very proud to have been associated with it. 🍷

passion for rockclimbing, especially in Victoria's Grampians in recent years. Chris lives in Melbourne with his wife Sue. He rates their fostering of a young girl for three years as his most worthwhile experience, and his commitment to engendering an appreciation of the value of wilderness and to ending native-forest logging in Australia as being of particular importance to him.

Life after Wild? In co-founding a magazine, Michael Collie, at age 25, fulfilled a childhood dream. From *Wild*, Michael went 'bush', hunting and gathering with Kunwinjiku friends in the Northern Territory. It was later, while visiting medical missionary friends in the Himalayan foothills, that the future became clear. In its quarterly magazine, the Church Missionary Society of Australia was advertising for a graphic designer to work with an indigenous Christian book publisher in Latin America. This was a project for which seven-and-a-half years at *Wild* had uniquely prepared him. Michael and his wife Elzabeth arrived in Buenos Aires on April Fool's Day, 1992. Their two daughters, Lucy (6) and Katherine (3), were born in Argentina. Never far from a magazine, Michael is taking time off from book publishing at present to prepare the 2001 issue of *LebáViva*, a periodical of the cooperative of Latin American Christian book publishers of the same name.

The Other Half

Lachlan Drummond reflects on the role of advertising in Wild

AS I THOUGHT ABOUT 80 ISSUES OF *Wild* it occurred to me that much of the attention associated with *Wild*'s 20th anniversary would be focused (and deservedly so) on some of *Wild*'s most significant achievements, such as introducing many thousands of readers to the Australian wilderness, the fearless gear surveys, the stunning photography and engrossing articles, and the influence on environmental awareness and action. Yet, after 20 years, I thought it worth while to reflect on the non-editorial half of every issue of *Wild*. I refer to the advertising.

I was the Advertising Manager for Wild Publications from 1996 until early in 2000. It was a most enjoyable, rewarding—and at times stressful—job. On the Advertising Manager's shoulders rests the responsibility for half of the magazine. It is no exaggeration to say that *Wild* would cease to exist without the advertising. The revenue generated ensures the magazine's survival from issue to issue. So it seems appropriate not only to thank those many advertisers who have contributed to the success of *Wild* but also to reflect on some of the issues behind the advertising scenes.

Organising the advertising in *Wild* can be likened to completing a big jigsaw puzzle under the pressure of a looming deadline, and invariably with pieces absent right up until the puzzle is due for completion. In every issue of *Wild* hundreds of ads have to be booked, designed and placed. At the end of each quarter the Advertising Manager is able to sit back and see the product of his or her labours.

Well before the first issue was printed Chris Baxter took a mock-up of the magazine, which was little more than the cover, to potential advertisers Australia-wide. It was not easy to convince would-be advertisers of the benefits of a yet-to-be-published magazine. But Chris's enthusiasm was infectious—the first issue was an advertising sell-out. Since then, a great number of issues have been oversubscribed by interested advertisers.

As many readers will know, *Wild* has maintained a strong position with regard to the appropriateness of advertising. Not for publication include ads for four-wheel drives, for products unrelated to subject matter and for products that contribute to the denigration of the environment. Such a strong stance has won both praise and criticism and has cost the business significant revenue in lost advertising. On numerous occasions there

was a stunned silence on the telephone when I had politely told advertisers that they were not appropriate for *Wild*. I doubt whether any of them had ever been told that their advertising—and their money—would not be accepted!

To some, such a stance would be akin to committing business suicide. But even in financially tough times, *Wild*'s Managing Director and Managing Editor, Chris Baxter, has consistently held that he would rather

'On numerous occasions there was a stunned silence on the telephone when I had politely told advertisers that they were not appropriate for Wild.'

see the business 'go to the wall' than compromise its values. This is almost unheard of in magazine publishing and probably in business in general. Ironically, refusing to accept advertising from some businesses has probably done more to enhance *Wild*'s reputation than to harm it. It has clearly won respect and admiration from readers and advertisers and has probably also added something to the 'exclusivity' of the publication. In recent years an ethical approach to business has become more common; consider The Body Shop, for example. But 20 years ago this stance was clearly setting a precedent. It is a credit to Chris and to *Wild* that the business has followed, and made a success of, such a stance.

The ethical position extends beyond making judgments about the appropriateness of certain ads. Concerns advertisers have about poor reviews in gear surveys is a common issue. Not infrequently major advertisers have threatened to cancel their advertising on the basis of a poor write-up in *Wild* gear surveys. Indeed, many advertisers have withdrawn their advertising because of such concerns. *Wild*'s editorial space cannot be bought, no matter how much an advertiser spends. (See the Editorial in *Wild* no 74.)

On many occasions I fielded comments from advertisers such as: 'Why should I

advertise when you undermine my products with critical reviews?' This was never an easy question to answer, but such an unbiased stance has no doubt led to the exceptional loyalty of readership that *Wild* enjoys. And it is this loyalty that attracts advertisers. And so, in a way, *Wild*'s advertising policies are a double-edged sword for advertisers. While they would like to influence editorial, such a position would erode *Wild*'s credibility and lead to a loss of readership. And without readers the magazine would not attract advertising. It is *Wild*'s independence that keeps advertisers and readers coming back.

At times I found it difficult to adhere to *Wild*'s advertising policies knowing that one favourable comment about a product might net thousands of dollars in advertising or that a negative comment would make it difficult for me to encourage that advertiser to return. However, it was also liberating to work in an environment where the rules are clear and usually respected by advertisers (at least after patient explanation). It was a pleasure to work in an ethical and morally consistent environment.

Magazine advertising is often regarded by readers as a necessary evil and a distraction from the editorial. This is not so with *Wild*. Advertising in *Wild* is very well accepted by its readers. Surveys over many years have consistently revealed that *Wild* readers enjoy the advertising. Because of *Wild*'s policy of accepting only advertising related to subject matter, readers are not exposed to pages of unrelated material that diminish the relevance of, and interest in, all content.

I have never considered myself a salesperson and I doubt whether I could have lasted in a deadline-driven job such as the Advertising Manager's were I simply a salesman. What fuelled my enthusiasm was the belief in the magazine and what it stands for, especially during heated disputes or when having problems such as last-minute cancellations, wrong-sized ads or the many other problems that seemed to conspire to leave a blank space in the magazine. And often, to the credit of *Wild*'s advertisers, they were as loyal and as true to 'the *Wild* idea' as I was. And so I thank all those who have advertised over 20 years, those I have coaxed, cajoled and sworn at, and even those who have given me (and the other Advertising Managers) the very occasional sleepless night—your money has been well spent! 📞



I advertise in **Wild** because it bloody works!

Steve Jamieson
J&H Agencies Pty Ltd



Advertising Rate Card

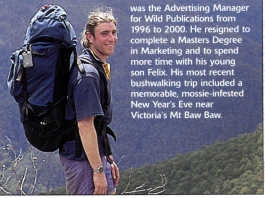
The direct approach. Wild advertising rate card, 1987.

The stayers and the faithfuls

Display advertisers in Wild no 1 that are still in business
(Twenty-five of the original 52 have survived; down from 36 survivors ten years ago.)

- Allgoods**
- Alpine Guides (Mount Cook)
 - Australian Himalayan Expeditions (now World Expeditions)
 - Caving Equipment (now Spelean)
 - Eastern Mountain Centre
 - Eastwood Camping Centre
 - Eureka! tents (now through Outdoor Performance)
 - Fairydown
 - Forests Commission of Victoria (now Department of Conservation & Natural Resources)
 - Grant Minervini Agencies
 - Macpac
 - Macson Trading (Silva)
 - Mountain Designs
 - Mountain Equipment
 - Outdoor Agencies
 - Outdoor Life
 - Paddy Pallin (retail and manufacture)
 - Peregrine Expeditions
 - Puradown
 - Rosco Canoes
 - Scout Outdoor Centres (now Snowgum)
 - The Wilderness Shop (Box Hill)
 - The Wilderness Society
 - Thor (now a Paddy Pallin franchise)
 - WL Gore & Associates
- * Display advertiser in this issue (no 80)
* Display advertiser in the next issue (no 81)

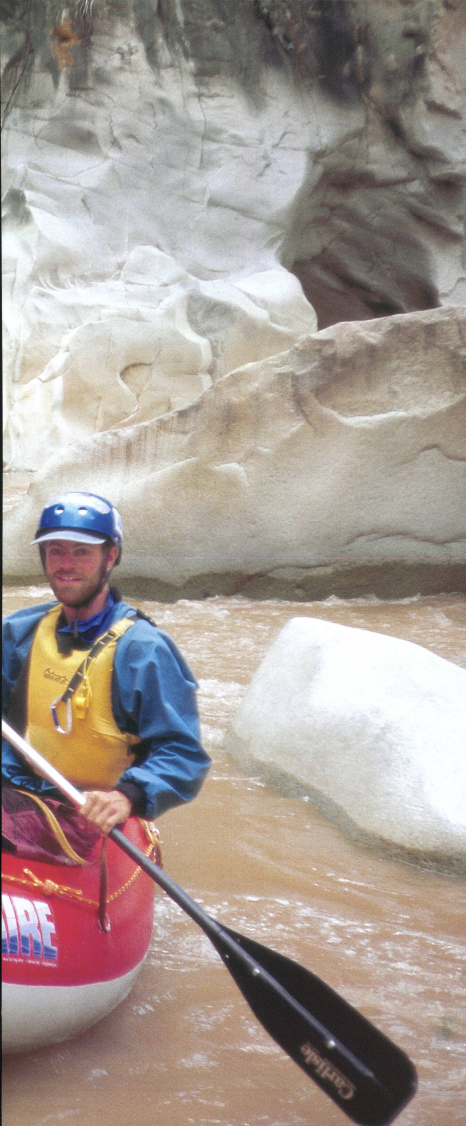
Lachlan Drummond



was the Advertising Manager for Wild Publications from 1996 to 2000. He resigned to complete a Masters Degree in Marketing and to spend more time with his young son Felix. His most recent bushwalking trip included a memorable, mossie-infested New Year's Eve near Victoria's Mt Baw Baw.

Wild AUTUMN 2001 39
Chloe takes 8 seconds





Across South America by Foot and Raft

Ben Kozel's epic tale of the first descent of the entire length of the Amazon by raft. All photos Ben Kozel collection

THE RAFT HOVERED IN THE SANCTUARY OF the eddy. The thunderous roar from below drowned out even the sound of the blood thumping in my ears. I braced my paddle against a rock and pushed. As we crossed the eddy line that demarcated the boundary between gentle swirl and raging torrent, the front of the boat was sucked into the first of three chutes that formed the tiered rapid set. Wedging a foot even tighter under the thwart (seat), I leaned back and over the side and thrust my paddle deep under the foamy surface, straining to keep the bow pointed forward.

The raft careened perfectly down the chute and I barked an order above the crescendo, demanding hard forward strokes from the two men up front. At the same time I angled left to avoid colliding with a boulder jutting out from the shore on my right.

The manoeuvre came too late. The back end of the raft slammed, recoiled violently off the boulder and bucked me overboard as though I were a bull-riding cowboy. I struggled to swim but in the churning water

A flat section, between rapids, on the Apurimac River. From left, Australian Ben Kozel, South African Scott Borthwick and Canadian Colin Angus. The three men rafted down the Amazon without a support crew, on a shoestring budget and with precious little experience of adventure travelling.

my body would only go where nature dictated. An undertow grabbed my legs. It swept me alongside the boat—teasingly just out of reach of the perimeter rope—and continued hauling me ahead. Then, with almost gloating intent, it spun me around and presented the jagged rock wall on which I was to be dashed.

I hit hard, the air exploding from my lungs. Then I was pulled under. In the angry fizz, there was neither buoyancy nor any way to know my depth or even which way was up. In white-water rafting terminology, I was being 'Maytagged'—a term coined from the brutally similar situation of clothes in a washing machine. For half a minute (or, in my panic, what seemed half a lifetime) I floundered in the recirculating water.

Then came a tug—and the reminder of my lifeline, a windfall from the unconventional tactic we'd devised only the day before as a way to stop losing more paddles. The

paddle I had kept gripping with subconscious, white-knuckle firmness was attached to the perimeter rope by four metres of rock-climbing tape and a karabiner. Above me, my frantic comrades in the still-upright raft had escaped the recirculation at the base of the third chute. Now their momentum wrenched me out of the 'hole', through some more aqua-fury to the tranquil river at the base of the run. Had my life not still been in rapid playback mode, I might have enjoyed this subsurface version of water-skiing.

Minutes later, perched on the bank and shaking in the warm sun, I could not suppress a humourless chuckle. I recalled days of uphill struggle during the gruelling three-week trek to the source of the Amazon. I had longed for the gravity-aided rafting descent. Now it felt as though I had been craving my own doom.

Events had been put in motion months earlier when Colin Angus, a Canadian friend

from my European backpacking days, decided that he liked the idea of tropical South America more than another winter spent cutting and selling firewood. I was living in sunny Mackay, Queensland, contentedly working on conservation projects, but easily sold on a plan to run the entire 6700 kilometre length of the Amazon River. The journey had been made only twice. First in 1986 by a well-financed US–Polish kayaking expedition, then in 1997 by a lone ex-spatial-forces soldier from South Africa. Our aim was to be the first successful rafting crew.



Angus (left) following the owner of the hired donkeys at the continental divide, near the village of Madrigal, Peru. The three-week trek, combined with the rafting, led them across South America from the Pacific coast to the source of the Amazon in the Andes of southern Peru, and finally to the Atlantic Ocean.



An inventory of the party's cooking and eating implements two days after all their proper eating equipment sank to the bottom of the Apurimac River during a flip: part of a shovel for frying, a glass-jar cup, makeshift spoons and a sardine-can saucepan complete with handle.



After a whirlwind preparation, unsuccessful sponsorship attempts and a rendezvous with South African chum Scott Borthwick, we headed for Peru.

The Amazon promised months of solid rafting but first we wanted to see where it all began. The ultimate source of the mighty river is a peak called Mt Mismi, rising in the Andes of southern Peru. On 11 September 1999, at Camana on the Pacific coast, we shouldered rucksacks weighing 30 kilograms and began the long haul eastward.

We traced a route through interlocking valleys of a coastal desert where poor farmers

eke out a living on narrow floodplains by irrigating crops with melt water from distant summits. The lower mountains here are starkly barren, sheer and craggy in their infancy of four million years. In contrast, the Australian Alps have been formed over the past six hundred million years. Outside the towns, with their scooters and concrete, the way of life seemed to be from another time. We trudged through hamlets made of mud, cane and thatch. We teetered on sag-

abandoned. Already weak from lingering sickness, the three litres of fluid we each carried just weren't sufficient. Colin insisted on trying the juice of cacti that began dotting the slopes but promptly spat the stuff out when it numbed his lips. And despite exalting the British Army technique, Scott balked at the reality of drinking his nostril-burning, dark-brown pee.

I could barely swallow. My head throbbed with heatstroke. We dropped our packs and

delayed start to the rafting would mean higher volume white water.

At nearly 5000 metres a dull headache was my only sign of *soroche* (altitude sickness). Colin and Scott weren't so lucky, often vomiting and barely able to raise themselves from the floor of the old hut used by alpaca herders which we called base camp. I decided to summit Mt Mismi solo.

The Mismi ridge does not tower above all else. At first I often stopped, peering at the map and trying to match landscape features with contour lines. The good weather was holding. Fields of strange ice sculptures mesmerised me. With each step the air thinned and my light head filled with the murmuring voices of doubt. Two days before I had never been higher than 3500 metres. Here I was approaching 5500 metres. It seemed pretty stupid. But still the sun shone. The slaty rock fragments scraped and slid underfoot. My legs screamed for oxygen as I traversed a final arete to reach the little cairn atop the summit.

Within a few moments—almost as though I had triggered an Indiana Jones-style booby trap mechanism—clouds rushed up from below and snow began to fall. For several minutes I marvelled at the flakes that would eventually find their way to the distant Atlantic. Only raindrops falling in the River Nile's uppermost reaches have a longer journey to the sea.

Inspired and bursting with pride, I launched my descent to base camp, scree-jumping and boulder-hopping through the worsening weather and failing light. Icy rock-faces and boggy ground made the return tough. Darkness fell, the



Kozel (left) and Angus while snagged briefly on a semi-submerged rock during the descent of a grade-4 rapid in the Apurimac River. 'None of us had known big white water before but here we clicked, gritting teeth in unison to overcome a lack of skill and experience.'

ging branches lashed together to form precarious footbridges, and passed shepherds dozing under trees while their herds of alpaca eyed us suspiciously.

Our equipment took a beating early. The white-gas Coleman stove (running on unleaded petrol—the closest thing we could find) stopped working after two days. The water filter had only slightly better success with the silty streams. I wasn't surprised when all three of us staggered into the town of Corire and checked into the nearest cheap hotel for the next four days with chronic diarrhoea.

Later we entered an especially dry valley, devoid of vegetation. The topographical map showed an ephemeral watercourse but the bleached riverbed stones looked as though there hadn't been any moisture for decades. The landscape was serene and captivating, disturbed only by a single, scampering desert fox. The sun blazed. On paper, a tiny patch of green and a lonely church indicated a spring two days' hike away. But the map detail was based on 40-year-old information and it was hard to rid myself of the fear that the spring had long dried up and been

scaled a ridgeline. Nothing. A second ridgeline. Still nothing. Stumbling up the third, I glimpsed a cross at the top. It was dust-scoured and leaning, but still kept vigil over the longed-for oasis.

As the altitude increased to 3000 metres we moved into the former cradle of Inca civilisation. Farmers were preparing terraces centuries old for the next corn crop. I saw stands of Aussie eucalypts thriving at heights much greater than any in the mother country. We crossed the Colca Canyon—the world's deepest—then hired donkeys to lug our gear up the steep slopes leading to the Pampa plateau.

Such a rapid change in altitude was risky but time was playing on our minds. The hotter wet season was approaching and a

snowfall thickened, and I could have passed within 100 metres of the hut and not known. Just as the best option seemed to be shivering the night away under an overhang, I glimpsed the searching torch beams of Colin and Scott.

At the secluded village of Pilpinto the Apurimac River was sufficiently deep to float our raft. We had christened it *Los Labios*—Spanish for 'The Lips', which it resembled from above. The locals wrote us off as naive, joy-riding tourists with too much spare time. 'Yes, the river is nice here, but down there...' A shake of the head finished the sentence. They sniggered at visions of our date with destiny; probably disappointed that they would not be there to say, 'We told you so'.

'I had longed for the gravity-aided rafting descent. Now it felt as though I had been craving my own doom.'

The easy riffles (stretches of choppy water) soon gave way to tricky obstacle courses where the water dropped through a maze of boulders and semi-submerged rocks. Down the steep sides of the canyon, spectacular waterfalls spilled into and nourished the restless child. Like muscles, the rapids grew in size. To me, the river here was a thinking being, flexing its might, conspiring to wreck us.

We rallied. Our teamwork improved. None of us had known big white water before but here we clicked, gritting teeth in unison to overcome a lack of skill and experience. Cuts and bruises were common, and the fact that medical help was at least a week away always lay in the back of our minds. It was very remote country. There was little hope of climbing out of the canyon and no chance of doing so if one of us broke a limb. The only escape was down the river.

Scares came by the hour. We took turns falling overboard. Undercut rocks strained the water flowing beneath them and might gather up any swimmer in their sunken embrace for ever. When the dreaded flips happened, we were all in the drink. Gear loosened, then floated away. At one point all our pots, pans and cooking utensils sank, leaving us to boil beans in cut-off plastic jerrycans and to fry oatcakes on the rusty blade of a shovel. In between the rapids, stretches of *plano* (flat water) let us relax. I marvelled at the geologic formations of the gorge. Metres above our heads, rounded hollow-outs marked the power of whirl-

and cane grass grew on higher ledges. It was likely that human feet had never been in these places. Every night for four weeks the growl of white water punctured the tent fabric and permeated my dreams.

And then it was over. The rifles returned and the bony gorge grew into a wide valley cloaked by lush cloud forest. Long boats with outboards zoomed between villages, ferrying passengers and tropical produce. We activated plans to modify the raft set-up, combining it with balsa logs, a few lengths of bamboo, and several strategically

us could read, doze, play chess or wave greetings to stupefied onlookers.

In the 1980s and early 1990s this cloud forest region was the haunt of *Sendero Luminoso* or 'Shining Path' guerrillas, fighting to overthrow the Peruvian government and install communism. The locals warned us of trouble, but everything we'd read indicated that it was now safe. Not even the sight of fishermen with shotguns slung over their shoulders and helicopter gunships flying over camp worried me much. I put it down as the legacy of a terrible past.



After the white water had ended, the men modified the raft set-up to produce a lightweight, sturdy row-boat complete with two oars. They also erected an awning-like shelter. Kozel (left) rowing with Borthwick near the Peru/Brazil border, exploring one of the thousands of small tributaries that feed into the main river.

Stopped for inspection at a small, riverside military camp in Peru. Borthwick (third from left) and Angus (far right) pose with armed, nervous soldiers. The rafting party was fired at twice in one day; for the following three days nervous militiamen brandishing weapons regularly halted and searched their raft.

pools that form in the Apurimac during the peak of the wet season.

Our camp-sites were picturesque and soothing, beaches of cool, grey sand scattered with chunks of granite. Thorny trees

placed cam straps. The result was one lightweight, sturdy row-boat complete with two oars. It worked beautifully, allowing a single rower to generate more speed than three paddlers. Between shifts at the oars, two of

One morning as I rowed past a lone thatched hut, five men in rags burst from the interior and shouted at us to come ashore. Two held shotguns. We simply smiled and pretended not to understand. When it was clear that we would not stop, one figure raced down to the bank, levelled his gun and fired twice. The shots missed, but there was bile in my throat and my heart threatened to rip from my chest. The swift current pulled us round a bend and out of range before he could fire again. Never had I been consumed by such profound fear and helplessness.

If that wasn't drama enough, later the same day we found ourselves diving into the water as soldiers aboard a speedboat sent a volley of bullets overhead. We had unwittingly passed a military checkpoint and the furious base commander had thought we were drug runners.

For three days after that, nervous militiamen brandishing rifles or bows and arrows regularly halted and searched our boat. Tormented and continually on guard, there was little prospect of savouring the near-pristine wilderness.

The friendly town of Atalaya proclaimed the end of troubled territory. Now we could concentrate on sidestepping more palatable dangers like malaria, dysentery, crocodiles and six metre long anacondas. Back in the gorges curious otters had sometimes followed us. On the flat river pink dolphins played near the raft. These are strange-looking creatures and living evidence that the Amazon River once flowed backwards into the Pacific Ocean. Caimans (smaller cousins of Australian salt-water crocs) lurked at the far

for trade and transport. Not far from the Peru/Brazil border, the port of Iquitos, with almost half a million residents, is the largest city on earth that cannot be reached by any road.

Life on our four metre boat assumed a pleasant and cheerful routine. We could go days without landfall. Firing up the on-board kerosene stove, we indulged ravenous appetites, consuming banana pancakes, tapioca pudding, chilli con carne and plenty of dirt-cheap Brazilian coffee. The tropical sun was warded off by a 'bimini', an awning-like shelter cleverly fashioned from the arching poles and fly of the tent. At times it felt as though I were lounging on a giant air mattress.

But the easy life couldn't last. As the river broadened and the wet season peaked, the hardships mounted. Head winds sped over

we got lost. The water itself seemed unsure how to reach the sea. Strong tides swept far up the river, so every six hours we'd tie up to a rickety pier and chat with perplexed delta folk. Once a leathery-faced old man came to sit on the end of the raft and grin. A raised scar cut the length of his face. 'Do not go on the river at night', he said abruptly. Seeing the blazing fire in those dark eyes, I knew that I wasn't going to like his reasoning. 'Peeraches com heeflez' came the declaration in hushed Portuguese. Pirates with rifles! 'Is a big problem here.' I believed him, too. The city of Belém loomed, with its fair share of the poor and the desperate.

In those final weeks we crawled towards the mouth. It hardly stopped raining. The opposite bank of the channel disappeared over the horizon. Wind-driven swells gave me the sense of already being out at sea and made every ar stroke a real effort. There was no disputing the fact that more



The three men triumphantly hold their home-made flags aloft after making the first descent by raft of the entire length of the Amazon. During their trip of nearly five months they avoided gunshot and had near misses with vessels as large as ocean-going freighters. Standing in the Atlantic at Point Taipu, Brazil, are, from left, Angus, Kozel and Borthwick.

outskirts of camp for several evenings after we left Atalaya.

But as the rainforest thickened it was the mosquitoes that made their presence felt most. At dusk one evening as we set up our tents the hordes descended. The ghostly collective hum and ensuing bloodfest made us decide to start rowing around the clock. Out in the middle of an ever-widening river they rarely found us. The new regime also quickened our progress and meant that we had a better chance of finishing the voyage before our plane tickets and funds expired.

The one problem with night travel was the threat of collision with other river traffic. Laws on navigation lights are lax in South America and the helmsmen of barges and passenger boats were probably too sleepy to notice our Chinese lantern. We had several near misses with vessels as large as ocean-going freighters. The river is the main artery

the huge expanses of water, whipping up choppy waves that made rowing awkward. The bimini had to be pulled down before it sailed us backwards and then the heavens would open. Although the equator was only a few hundred kilometres away, the temperature plunged during these squalls. Shivering under plastic sheets and praying that the creaking balsa timbers would survive became a daily and often nightly ritual. The jungle river evoked a mixture of feelings in me. The stench of rotting clothes was offset by the old-world charm of fishermen spearing a livelihood from dugout canoes. Magical rainforest sunsets took my mind off the pain of fungal infections. Awe seemed to numb all adversity.

By late January 2000 we had entered the vast Amazon delta. Stilted houses nestled into palm groves throughout a maze of narrow channels. Lacking detailed maps,

'Now we could concentrate on sidestepping malaria, dysentery, crocodiles and six metre long anacondas.'

Ben Kozel

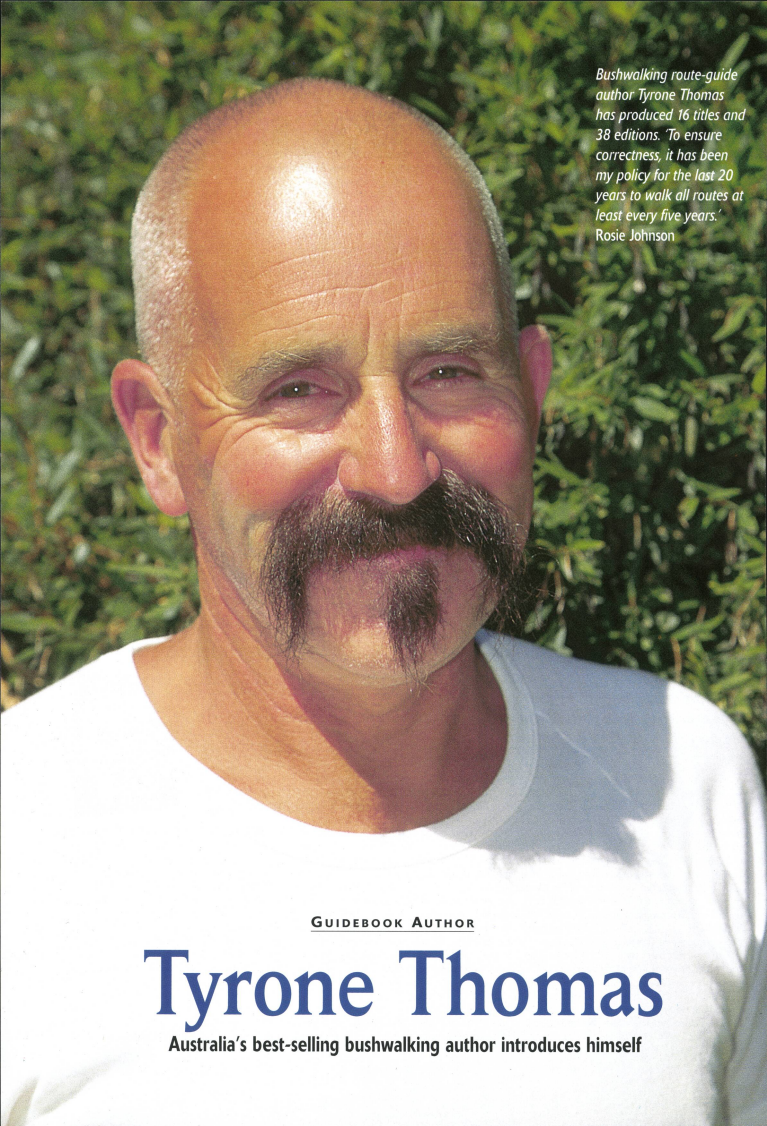
is 27 and lives in Adelaide. After university he alternated backpacking with leading projects for the Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers. At present he is making preparations to voyage the Yenisey River, from Mongolia to the Arctic Ocean. Web site for the Yenisey Expedition: <http://www.raftyenisey.com>



water flows from the mouth of the Amazon in one day than from that of the Murray in a year. It's a fact that still boggles the mind of a boy who grew up in parched Adelaide.

In a drizzly dawn on 9 February I stood on the beach of Point Taipu, welcomed to the murky, brown sea by a decayed lighthouse. Any imagined romance for this moment soon faded. No salty breeze ruffled the curls of my hair as I squinted into a rising sun. Instead, the muddy sand swallowed my feet to the ankles, and the grit, trapped beneath wet clothes, scraped against my cold skin.

And yet, I don't think it was possible for me to feel discomfort. At the end of this long voyage, nothing mattered beyond a sense of triumph. 🌊



Bushwalking route-guide author Tyrone Thomas has produced 16 titles and 38 editions. To ensure correctness, it has been my policy for the last 20 years to walk all routes at least every five years.'
Rosie Johnson

GUIDEBOOK AUTHOR

Tyrone Thomas

Australia's best-selling bushwalking author introduces himself

I HAVE WALKED 40 370 KILOMETRES—AND the circumference of the earth at the equator, we are told, is 40 075 kilometres! As a bushwalking route-guide author, I am on the move establishing and checking walks. The notebook computer (my constant companion) indicates that in November 2000, during my rechecking of *100 Walks in Tasmania* for its fifth edition, I notched up the 40 075 kilometres. You may think that I am crazy but I believe that I am most fortunate. I have never married and haven't any dependants, so I have had an advantage in being able to do as I please when I please and, in my opinion, have accomplished more than many people.

It all began in 1973 when I wrote an article for the annual magazine of the Melbourne Bushwalkers club. Impressed by the writing, Alec Proudfoot (now deceased), a friend and past president of the club, introduced me to Hill of Content Publishing. *100 Walks in Victoria* was the result. Those 100 walks required 2306 kilometres of preview bushwalking, some of it scrub-bashing. At that stage I already had ten years' experience as a bushwalker, and I haven't any idea of the extra distance walked during those early years. I also do not know how much additional bushwalking there has been—either overseas or unrelated to the books—since 1973. When I look at that book today I am amazed that such a mediocre publication could have sold 5000 copies within a few weeks, leaving the publisher aghast and hastily printing more. It now looks so drab with a lack of colour pictures, only a few very poor maps and cheap paper. It retailed for \$2.95 and I got 29.5 cents a copy.

I have produced 16 titles including two in Germany and am working on the next one. These have 38 editions. To ensure correctness, it has been my policy for the last 20 years to walk all routes at least every five years. *120 Walks in Victoria*, the best seller, is now in its 26th year and its seventh edition. As you might expect, *100 Walks in Tasmania* has always been a good seller, too. The walks in Cradle Mountain–Lake St Clair National Park and to Frenchmans Cap seem the most popular from that book.

It is surprising how the distances add up when checking walk routes. The original 2306 kilometres for the main Victorian book have been rationalised, and the suggested walks varied better to suit readers. I also learned long ago not to describe routes that include off-track walking. I found that my readers were (undesirably) creating new tracks by following the suggested routes in wilderness. By the time I had produced the book's sixth edition, I had walked 11 768 kilometres for those six editions. Add to this five editions of *100 Walks in Tasmania*, totalling 6580 kilometres, and you can appreciate

the accumulation. Despite the small size of Tasmania many of the walks there are longer and harder than those in other States. I also soon learned to describe walks in loops back to transport rather than suggesting walks from points A to B.

The walking is still most enthralling. I often wonder how anyone could not be awestricken at the beauty of our globe and all the intricacies of geology and the plant and animal world. How I love to be on a high point, in such wild places as New South Wales's Budawang, Queensland's Hinchinbrook Island or Tasmania's Freycinet Peninsula. The effort to reach the high point is set aside as I revel in the wild surroundings. These days, too, I find the climb increasingly pleasurable because of my better knowledge of plants and geology which takes my mind off the exertion.

On average I walk three months a year, which keeps me remarkably fit. At the age of 62, I find that I can still undertake even

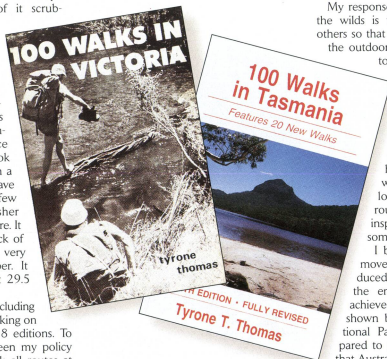
the very hardest of walks with ease, and think little of walking 40 kilometres in a day. Occasionally I might reluctantly complete 50 kilometres rather than carry a heavy overnight pack or to avoid the onset of bad weather. Naturally, I prefer to linger and enjoy the bush rather than rush, keeping the distance to, say, 25 kilometres, but far too many of my friends (in my age group) now refuse to walk with me because they cannot keep up. I need to walk with fit, young companions and, as I must include walking mid-week (when many people are at work), and according to weather, I now often have to walk alone to get the checking done. I keep one eye on the weather all the time and rarely get caught in rain. If the weather is doubtful, I simply stay at home. I must confess that in March 1995 on my last attempt at the Direct Ascent of Tasmania's Federation Peak I froze from fear and did not make the final summit. I see that as a first warning that as I get older I will experience troubles.

My response to my love of walking and the wilds is to relate the experience to others so that they, too, may come to love the outdoors and, it is to be hoped, be totally converted to the cause of its conservation. The bush is its own best advertisement.

A recent new book, *My Environmental Exposé*, was on several conservation- and related matters which I neither hear of nor read about elsewhere. This has broken my long tradition of producing route guides and, I hope, will inspire readers to think about some new issues of concern.

I believe that the conservation movement within Australia has produced an increasing awareness of the environment and has largely achieved its aims to date. This is shown by the great number of National Parks designated today, compared to past decades. Did you know that Australia now has about 3000 wildlife parks/reserves? Governments have largely acted in response to public opinion. All manner of legislative protection is in place. There continues to be a rapid growth in the number of Landcare groups around rural Australia. Our national broadcaster, the ABC, produces many informative land-care-type programmes. These no doubt play an important part, particularly in keeping the rural community abreast of trends. Campaigns to save whales, rainforest, Lake Pedder, the Franklin and the Daintree are all legendary. For these reasons the overall scene is somewhat positive. But there is still a long way to go, hence my exposé book.

Writing route guides brings rewards. Although I can manage to live off royalties and go bushwalking as my occupation, the royalties never amount to much. You have to be a Colleen McCullough to do well as an author in Australia. My joy is that my



Left, the first edition of 100 Walks in Victoria (now in its seventh edition) was published in 1975. When I look at that book today I am amazed that such a mediocre publication could have sold 5000 copies within a few weeks, leaving the publisher aghast and hastily printing more. Right, in his introduction to the fourth edition of 100 Walks in Tasmania, Thomas writes: 'It is hoped that this book will induce people to go out walking. It is also hoped that it will help them grow to love the Tasmanian bush and learn to care both for it and for themselves.'

work is so pleasant. The taxman helps to pay for *Wild* magazines, maps, the computer, the car, a tent and other gear, the review of walks on Great Barrier Reef islands and a host of other work-related expenses. The Australia Council sends a nice cheque every year from Canberra, under the Public Lending Right Scheme. This is to compensate for all the books on shelves in public libraries deterring would-be readers from buying them, and thereby reducing royalties. There is also pleasure in receiving letters and emails from readers. These days they are rarely other than complimentary. They come from all over the world. I even received one from the world-famous Cornell University in the USA, seeking information. It seems that having my Web page has created extra interest in Australian walking. My local council saw the Web page and engaged me for consultancy work relating to walks in the local Hanging Rock Reserve. Several newspapers and magazines have also approached me for articles. It is great to be asked rather than having to do the asking.

Problems of production seem few and these days I have the publisher bluffed to the extent that I oversee all stages of each book's production except for the physical printing which, to my regret, is often done overseas. As for walking, I have never been lost or even delayed overnight. The bush is mostly familiar and I can plan well, but there are exceptions. I recall clearly the time of Tasmania's Franklin River dam controversy years ago. My Tasmanian book had set a regular annual sales pattern, then suddenly everyone wanted track notes on the South-west wilderness area. Stocks of the book in the warehouse plummeted and I had to rewalk 100 walks for a new edition immediately. This coincided with both the NSW and Victorian books being almost sold out. Can you imagine having to do 320 walks for these three books within a few months? It was quite impossible given that I then also had other full-time employment. By 1988 I had given up that un-inspiring insurance assessing work to devote more time to writing.

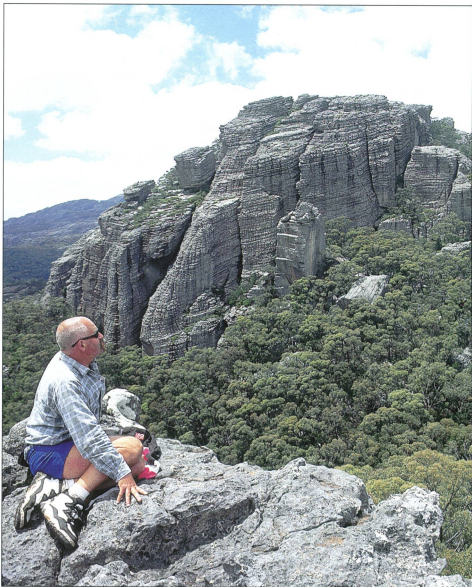
Radio, television and press publicity have been frequent features of my years of writing for bushwalkers. At first it was a novelty, but can you really appreciate what it is like to be woken at 6.30 am by a telephone call from a Sydney talk-back announcer stating that you are on air and seeking your comments on *100 Walks in New South Wales*? It is quite a shock to be sound asleep one moment, then promptly having to comment constructively and sensibly.

Over the years I have had many interesting experiences. This one might make you smile. Victoria's Prom was the scene for the most frightening incident in my life—or what seemed like it at the time. It was a hot night and I was asleep in my tent with its end open to allow air to circulate. One of my arms was hanging out of the tent. I was awoken in pitch darkness by excruciating pain in the tip of a finger. In my dazed state

I screamed so loudly that I woke everyone in camp. You guessed it—Black Pete, the dreaded possum, thought that my finger was good meat for his nightly dine-out!

Reminiscent of my dread of snakes in Australia during my early years as a bushwalker, I must admit to a similar fear of bears on recent North American trips. In bear country you are advised not to surprise

I was woken in my tent in a National Forest in Oregon by a terrible growling noise. Afraid, I peered out but could not see anything. About an hour later the same noise recurred, waking me again after I had only just managed to get back to sleep. This time, however, I was sufficiently alert to recognise the sound as that of the air brakes of a logging truck as it descended past the



Thomas says that his favourite walk in Australia 'is probably Mt Stapylton-Hollow Mountain in the Grampians, Victoria'. Here he is in the southern Grampians, looking at the Fortress. Sven Klinge

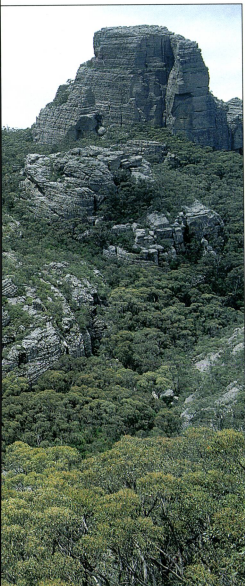
bears but instead to make a noise or sing a song as you hike. I saw three bears while alone in the woods (and singing away). I haven't any idea whether they were black, brown, grizzly, mother, father and baby bear or what. Goldilocks could even have been there! I backed off and left so fast that in the rush I backed into an overhanging sequoia limb and gashed my scalp. There was blood everywhere and when I reached the rental car an hour later, a guy told me to get to a doctor fast. I needed eight stitches. Some weeks later, quite uneasy about bears,

camp! One day I might learn not to panic over things such as snakes and bears.

Apart from walking, I have created a very large garden at an elevation of 800 metres on Mt Macedon outside Melbourne over 16 years. Macedon Regional Park adjoins, so I am surrounded by fine forest and watch many walkers go past my front gate. They are often seen carrying one of my books. Sometimes I invite them in for coffee and try to needle feedback from them regarding their use of the book. For me, the plants in my garden are an extension of

nature all around me. When not walking, much of my time in fine weather is spent in the garden. I do not conform to the peculiar Australian trend to grow only Australian plants or exotics. I prefer a mix of the best plants from around the world.

I collect maps of all types and from all countries and—would you believe—I also greatly enjoy city life. You can get from Mt

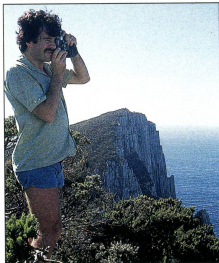


walk? If the question is asked by a Queenslander, I suspect that he or she hopes it will be some magnificent, wild place in Queensland. My answer is the Bandai San volcanic crater circuit in Japan, a country where I have spent four months. (Japan has some of the finest mountain scenery imaginable and it certainly does not woodchip its forests.) However, within Australia my choice is probably Mt Stapylton–Hollow Mountain in the Grampians, Victoria. The area was recently burnt but will quickly regenerate as is typical for the Grampians. We are indeed fortunate to have so much open space and to have so many National Parks and other parks in which to experience nature. Within them we have stunning scenery and unique flora and fauna. It is therefore most difficult for me truly to express which is the best walk in Australia.

Over time I have noticed trends within the bushwalking fraternity. Fit, young, male

walkers seem to be disappearing from many tracks, especially in NSW. Even Federation Peak does not seem to attract them like it did 20 years ago. Instead, they head for Cairns and certain other centres. I see sales of *50 Walks in North Queensland* picking up as the trendy, extreme sports around Cairns gather momentum and the fashionable rainforest bushwalking there grows as a spin-off. They go on their *mission beyond total extreme ultimate untamed ultra high eco challenge*. Alternatively, they rush to the danger-zone frontier of the oceans of mystery to see a dolphin! A big spurt in the growth of bushwalking as an activity occurred in the late 1970s after a slovenly television cartoon character called Norm incited everyone to get fit in a 'Life be in it' campaign. I was amazed at the power of television advertising to change people's views as my book sales soared. It is to be hoped that the tabloid-style cable- and satellite television pro-

'We have a vast network of walking tracks from which to choose and, in my opinion, perhaps ten times as much track as 20 years ago.'



In November 2000 Thomas notched up a total of 40 075 kilometres of walking—the distance equivalent to the circumference of the earth at the equator! This photograph shows a younger, snap-happy Thomas—with lots of hair! at Cape Pillar, Tasman Peninsula, Tasmania, in 1987. Tyrone Thomas collection

grammes of today will not cause the demise of bushwalking in favour of extreme sports. It has, however, surprised me recently that several men in their 30s and known to me have tried hang-gliding and bungy-jumping.

I observe a steady build-up of women in their 30s and 40s out on most of the tracks except on the really tough routes, possibly somewhat reflecting the independence they have achieved. Therefore, today's total number of walkers is probably constant. A few places seem to continue to attract more and more walkers but I suspect that in the main the total number is now more thinly spread over many more kilometres of track. We have a vast network of walking tracks from which to choose and, in my opinion, perhaps ten times as much track as 20 years ago. This diffusion of bushwalkers must surely be better for the bushland.

Might I conclude with a plea: with so much track now available, it would be great if you all considered further helping the environment by not leaving the tracks unless absolutely necessary. You might also like to make yourselves familiar with, and practise, the minimal impact bushwalking code and be inspired as I am by a verse by Stanley Heine.

In this great universe,
There is this tiny world
Among the big stars.
It is where life exists.
It is where we live. 🌞

Macedon to Melbourne by freeway within the hour. I love the city for its art, music, cafés, restaurants, theatre, ballet, films, clubs, bicycle tracks, botanic gardens and a host of other attractions. However, I prefer to live in the clean air amid the forest. I also adore beaches in summer and enjoy swimming. In the past, water-skiing and Nordic skiing have been my favourite sports but my friends and I haven't a boat and I totally wore out the snow skis. Travel, especially to National Parks and beaches around the world, is high on my agenda and I have now visited some 40 countries. Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, is the most stunning place that I have seen. In general, I love life and find that there is far too little time to cram everything into it.

One question asked of me hundreds of times over the years is: 'What is your favourite



ENDURANCE BUSHWALK

Doing the Dash

Care for a 55 kilometre stroll before dinner? Andrew Vilder joins the annual race against time from Kanangra Walls to Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales

TWENTY KILOMETRES THROUGH HILLY TERRAIN is a comfortable day's walk for a reasonably fit person. Go another ten, and you'll probably reach the limit of enjoyment where, if you haven't been careful, blisters and real fatigue set in. You could manage forty kilometres were someone to hold a gun to your head. Fifty? You struggle to imagine a reason.

Around that distance it becomes a mind game. You develop an amazing sense of focus, of single-minded purpose that propels your tired body onwards against its will. Gradually the pain you've been

The K-to-K passes through extremely rugged terrain. This photo of Kanangra Gorge was taken from Kanangra Tops, just east of the event's starting-point. Incredibly, the year 2000 group reached the summit of Mt Cloudmaker, on the horizon, at 10 am. Henry Gold

feeling fades; you are a little thirsty but not at all hungry. Your limbs settle into a naturally smooth rhythm and, to your surprise, you greatly increase the pace.

You have entered the rarefied performance stratosphere known by few people—marathon runners, racing cyclists, iron men and women. I presume that this is what is known as 'hitting the wall' and, having been there, I can tell you that it's much nicer on the other side. Yet walking through it is such a soft passage that you barely notice, and the reward is spending several hours 'beyond'—while you're clocking up those last 15 kilometres to reach the magic fifty-five.

For the last 12 years the first Saturday in September has held a special place on the calendars of a small group of Sydney bushwalkers. On this day these fairly ordinary people push themselves past their known limits to do something remarkable in the southern Blue Mountains. They are driven to Kanangra Walls, from where they walk cross-country to Katoomba—in one

would do these walks barefoot. How was this achieved?

The Tigers walked in close single file, with the two fastest members of the group at the front and rear, psychologically pushing and pulling the others along. Long rests were not allowed; high-energy food was eaten mainly on the go. Water-bottles were topped up from creeks when crossed. The party cruised along happily at seven or eight kilometres an hour, talking politics or swapping life stories, which helped to take the mind off the task at hand. This technique remains the same today except that the pace is probably slower—it seems we're not as tough as we used to be!

Mohandas is probably among the few walkers of this calibre still active, a modern-day Tiger. In 1989 he completed the classic Blue Mountains Three Peaks walk (see article in *Wild* no 69)—Mts Cloudmaker, Paralyser and Guouogang—in 48 hours return from Katoomba. In the same year he established another continuing annual walk for the club—the Six Foot Track from Ka-

***'...it is essentially not a race
against others but a battle
against your self-doubt.'***

day. A little constitutional. Some light exercise. Madness? Impossible? Or, as one participant put it a week later when he had recovered, very scenic.

The K-to-K was born in 1989. It was the idea of Jan Mohandas, an eminent member of the Sydney Bush Walkers (SBW), a club with a long history of extreme walks both in terms of speed and of distance. Such walks had their heyday in the late 1930s and a resurgence in the 1950s. The members who partook—both men and women—were informally known as 'Tiger' walkers.

Tracks in those early days were fewer and much less defined, therefore much of this walking was highly exploratory, with the walkers often literally drawing the map as they went.

They were superb navigators and skilled and experienced in travelling through bush country, camping in the wilderness at every available opportunity. None of the Tigers were professional athletes—they were bricklayers, carpenters and office clerks—making their feats even more remarkable. Walking was their only training.

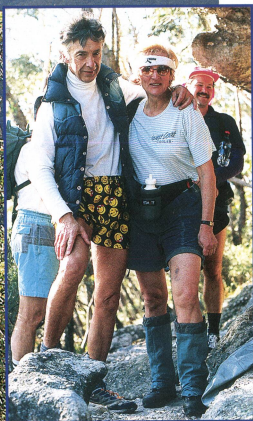
Sixty or eighty kilometres in one day carrying light packs was not uncommon, even the hundred was occasionally topped as a group. Certain walkers such as Max Gentle and Gordon Smith could, and did, surpass 150 kilometres in one day several times on their own in 1939. Incredibly, Dot Butler

toomba to Jenolan in one day: 43 kilometres. The next morning he borrowed a friend's car and drove on to Kanangra Walls, from where he could just make out the strip on the horizon that is Narrow Neck Peninsula.

Naturally, he wondered whether it was possible to walk there in a day by way of the Gangerang and Wild Dog ranges. Even his most track-hardened companions considered that it wasn't feasible, especially for a group; however, a month later Mohandas successfully led 15 others across the horizon to Katoomba. It took them exactly 12 hours.

How many kilometres are covered from K to K has long been a bone of contention between various outspoken individuals within the club. As the crow flies, or the ruler lies across the map, it's at least forty-nine. Some say fifty-two. However, this doesn't take into account the vertical distance on the hills: 250 metres up Mt Stormbreaker; 750 metres down Mt Strong Leg followed by 750 metres straight up Yellow Dog. Another 400 metres to get on to Narrow Neck near the end. And there are probably a further 1000 metres worth of climbing just in general track undulation. So the consensus hovers somewhere around 55 though it doesn't make much difference to those doing the walk.

For the technical, the walk is measured from the vehicular gate at Kanangra car park to its counterpart about five kilometres along the Narrow Neck fire track from Katoomba. Purists might keep going on foot until they hit the paved Cliff Drive or even Katoomba



The encouragement shared between co-walkers helps to get everyone across the finishing line. Two of the strongest walkers in the Sydney Bush Walkers lend each other a shoulder during the cold and windy 1999 K-to-K Jan Hill.

Railway Station, but to us it's enough to cover the part that *must* be walked. Besides, who wants to walk on a road?

An outstanding aspect of the K-to-K is the teamwork exhibited by all participants; it is essentially not a race against others but a battle against your self-doubt. Obviously, one must do a fair amount of physical training to attempt this walk, but it's the encouragement shared between co-walkers and provided by the support crew that plays a major role in getting everyone across the finishing line. Lasting friendships have been forged on the K-to-K, with many returning year after year either to walk or to provide support.

No one has taken part every year for the past 12; it's a slightly different group every time. Ken Smith claimed the record of nine times in a row before giving it away; Moandas has done it seven times and several others, five or six. The author completed his second 'big one' on 30 September 2000.

In recent years Phil Newman has led the walk and he's finding it a little harder each time to get the event off the ground. Like many other bushwalking clubs, the SBW has a stable but ageing membership. Tigers are not readily replaced from the ranks of following generations and the number of members capable of undertaking a marathon walk is rapidly dwindling.

Competing with many other modern distractions, serious bushwalking must often take a back seat to family commitments, longer working hours and the need for people just to be still and rest on weekends instead of galloping around the outdoors. Perhaps the greatest challenge bushwalkers will face in the coming decade will be finding the time to go.

For now, at least, the K-to-K will continue.

Somebody is calling my name in the night. I grope for my torch, and check my watch in the darkness of my tent. Quarter to five, 30 September. I remember where I am and what I am about to do. It's time to start eating again for the K-to-K. I say 'again' because I've been stuffing my body for the last two weeks, storing sufficient carbohydrate and protein to get me through this one Saturday. Tuna, pasta, potatoes and rice have been my constant staples, but I will eat very little on the day. I start with my secret weapon—tinned creamed rice, handfuls of sultanas and nuts, followed by as much apple juice as I can hold. Rocket fuel for climbing hills.

victim of serious misadventure would have to be helicoptered out.

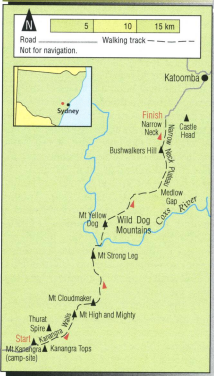
Six o'clock and we're away, loping easily across the Gangerang Plateau with the stunning Kanangra Deep still in shadow on our left. Thirty minutes later and we've all stripped down to T-shirts. We are lucky enough to see a lyre-bird's nest—complete with a fluffy, black chick inside—clinging to a low rock shelf. Mother is out collecting food.

The weather is cloudless and it feels ominously warm; this year's walk was delayed three weeks to help us all to overcome the flu. The heat is going to extract an extra toll from us—that's obvious now. As the temperature pushes



Those in the party who hadn't packed a pair of divers' booties found that wading through the shallow but swift Cows River was 'murder on sore feet'. Andrew Vilder

Central Blue Mountains



The voice belongs to Gail, one of my co-walkers. She's already dressed and her tent is packed away. I'd kill for a coffee, but there isn't time to make any. By 5.30 am the four walkers—Tony and Gail Crichton, Phil Newman and I—are being driven out to Kanangra Walls by our one-man support team, another Tony. He will pace us as far as Mt High and Mighty, then retrace his steps, drive his car 110 kilometres to Katoomba, and walk another 10 kilometres to meet us at the top of Tarros Ladders with Tim Tams. Such physical and moral sustenance is vital to this event, and we are grateful for it.

For the 40-odd kilometres in between we're on our own. One sprained ankle, a snake bite, or a bad case of blisters will blow it for everyone, so we're extra careful. No rock-hopping heroics today, or charging through short cuts. We'd be overnighing at the very least if anything went wrong, and a

into the 30s we wonder whether we've left it too late in the year.

We have too many cameras! Every walker has one. Snapping each other and the scenery is slowing us down, and we don't summit Mt Cloudmaker until after 10 am, an hour behind schedule. Phil, our leader, is not worried—yet. He knows that we should be able to make up time on the relatively flat ground of Gangerang Plateau, but this depends on good navigation as the track is dodgy here. We dash off through the light scrub on a series of compass bearings, and soon we're at a very dry Dex Creek. We enjoy a 20-minute rest in the shade.

Another two hours' solid walking brings us to a clearing on the top of Mt Strong Leg, where we stop for lunch and to check our feet for blisters. Adhesive bandages are applied to any developing 'hot spots'. I replace my socks with clean, dry ones—the first of

three changes during the walk. Our meal consists of biscuits, sandwiches, chocolate and muesli bars, washed down with Powerade because by now our bodies are craving salt. Glucose sweets are downed almost continuously.

The sun fries us on the terrible descent that follows. The track is dusty, rocky and loose. My toenails are trying to exit the front of my boots. Reaching the bottom, we become temporarily disoriented in a jungle of lantana, blackberry and stinging-nettles as we try to find Kanangra Creek to fill our water-bottles. It is disappointing to see these noxious plants growing here, their seeds no doubt washed in from the farms upstream of the nearby Cocks River.

Using the filtered Kanangra water, we remix our electrolyte drinks from powder. We're each carrying about 2.5 litres, which should be sufficient to blast us straight up the 'Puppy', Mt Yellow Dog. Without an excessive detour, we can't get any more water until we meet Tony on Clear Hill. Fortunately, an afternoon breeze has sprung up to cool us.

hot and tired. Phil is concerned about running late and climbing the iron spikes of Tarros Ladders in the dark though we assure him that this won't be the case. We need to cover 15 kilometres in the next three hours to prove him wrong. The track undulates

refreshments with Tony and his partner Kay. It feels like the end, but ten kilometres of fire track still have to be negotiated by torchlight.

The six of us round the last curve together and stare in disbelief at our cars parked beyond the gate. I am by



The 1999 K-to-K party pauses on Mt Cloudmaker for a photo. They still had a long walk ahead. Hill



Forty-five kilometres down...ten kilometres of fire track by torchlight still to go. The weary 2000 K-to-K foursome on Clear Hill. Gail Crichton

Wading the Cocks is murder on bare feet. It's quite cold, but we're not in the water long enough for our feet to go numb. The slimy rocks along the bottom are exactly the wrong shape and size on which to walk, and to fall in would be a disaster at this point. I watch helplessly as my hat is swept away in the swift current. Old hands such as Phil use a stout stick for balance; Tony and Gail produce two pairs of divers' booties and cross luxuriously. Somehow I manage to stagger across unaided.

At 2.45 pm we begin our assault on Yellow Dog, and it takes us an hour and a half to reach the top. Everyone is

through beautiful, temperate forest in the Wild Dogs—to my mind a really lovely part of the walk. We put our heads down and flash past Mobbs Swamp, then through Medlow Gap as the shadows lengthen. It's going to be a close call...

We scramble on to Narrow Neck in time to watch a glorious sunset over the Megalong and Burrigorang Valleys. To the south, we can just see the golden line on the horizon that is Kanangra Walls, and the sheer magnitude of our walk so far is revealed behind us. The westerly wind is now howling bitterly and we retreat into a rock overhang for

Andrew Vilder

lives in Sydney with his wife Monika and two young sons. He enjoys wilderness in many ways, from caving, canyoning, bicycle touring and, more recently, marathon bush-walking. An architect, artist and writer, he is at present Social Secretary of the Sydney Bush Walkers.



now on full autopilot; I ceased to think two hours ago. I can barely speak to the others. Slumped in the back seat of a car, I am too tired to take off my boots, let alone change my clothes. I don't care. I've finished my second K-to-K, and that's all that matters right now.

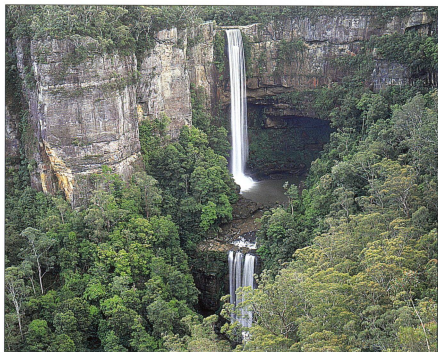
Somewhere deep inside I know that I'll be back next year. ☺

Phil, Andrew, Tony and Gail are all members of the Sydney Bush Walkers. Three have office jobs and two of those are asthmatics. They trained for the K-to-K solely by walking, completing a series of specific day walks in Sydney and the Blue Mountains during the eight weekends before the event. This included the Six Foot Track in one day on 26 August 2000.

In 2001 some of them plan to walk back to Kanangra the next day, just to make it a round trip. Any takers?

Nature's waterworks

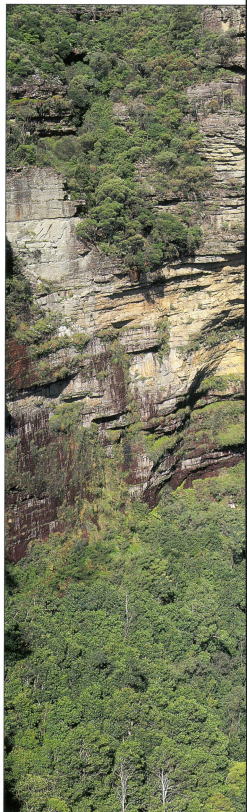
John Meier shoots some white water



Belmore Falls in the Morton National Park, New South Wales.



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A heritage born of the mountains...

Across the Alps

Alfred Wilson's account of his remarkable trek across the Victorian Alps almost 100 years ago

Having grown tired of the ways of the city, Alfred Wilson took the train to Warburton, east of Melbourne, in about 1902 to 'go away into the mountains for a spell'. His 'spell' lasted two-and-a-half months—from summer to autumn—and comprised walking from Warburton across the Victorian Alps to the isolated Wornangatta Station and then to Omeo.

Wilson was accompanied across the Alps by Jacob Jacobson, a Swede prospector whom he met at Gaffneys Creek, just beyond Woods Point. Jacobson wanted to try for gold in the ranges on the other side of the Goulburn River. Wilson's reply to this was: 'It isn't gold I am so much concerned about...I just want the trip.'

Wilson had left Gaffneys some time earlier 'when mining was so dead'. On his return he looked over the distant mountains and remembered to have promised himself a trip across those hills when he was young: '...although years had rolled away without my having fulfilled my promise to myself, and I had travelled far in the interval, I could not now resist the temptation.'

The two men packed a change of clothes and some blankets, shouldered them like swagmen do their swags' and sauntered down the road. Later that day they sat down to supper at a farmhouse on the bank of the Jamieson River. One of the river settler's daughters said: 'You're foolish to tramp those hills... We've got a horse, Hopping Joe. He's old but he's good yet. He'll pack your gear for you.' The pair purchased the packhorse.

Wilson and Jacobson continued on to the valley of Mitchells Creek, where they were guests of the Hoskins, a farming family. On hearing that they were making a trip across the mountains, George Hoskins said: 'You'll find it pretty rough going. There ain't many that travels them tracks these days, and bush fires has brought down hundreds of trees. I was across Howitt to Wornangatta a year ago, and I don't want to go again for a long time.'

Wilson and Jacobson then stayed overnight with George's brother Jim and George Fry, who were prospecting on Lickhole Creek, which falls into the Howqua River. We join the travellers shortly after on the upper river, on their way to Mt Howitt.

The Howqua comes out of the mountains in two forks. Our track lay up the North Fork, which headed out of Mt Howitt. The timber on the river flat was dense. We were in the heart of a great forest. It was silent and sombre in the fading hours of day. All night the tree branches and boughs roofed us to such an extent that we could scarcely get a glimpse of the stars that shone above the arboreal scene.

'No use pitching a tent', said Jacobson, and I was in agreement with him. We made a comfortable bed on gum leaves in front of a prodigious fire and settled ourselves for the night. The forest was alive with possums and we could hear them when they woke us as they climbed the trees and talked to one another. There were dingoes in the forest too and, attracted by the fire, they gathered about us and indulged in a mournful chorus.

across it and we knew the way. We halted on the brink of the tableland as on the edge of the earth. It was a cloudy day and a bitter wind swept the summit of one of the high peaks in the Dividing Range. But despite it all we delayed and gazed for a hundred miles over settled areas towards and beyond the town of Mansfield. Faintly in the distance, like a cloud on the horizon, we could discern the outlines of the Strathbogie Ranges. I began



Alex Trahair tends the fire in miserable conditions in a camp near Mt Howitt in the 1920s. Trahair collection

Morning was breaking when we felt rain dripping from the trees. We rose hurriedly and packed up our bed things. I left Jacobson to prepare breakfast while I went in search of Hopping Joe.

We forded the river and began the ascent. The timber was not so thick on the mountainside as on the flats along the river, but in various places the woollybutt grew profusely.

Here and there a dingo slinked along the bark-strewn track in front of us. The lyre-birds, not accustomed to seeing human beings in those remote parts, were no longer shy. They feared us no more than to keep out of our immediate reach and hopped on top of fallen logs and wondered at us as they talked to one another. As we climbed higher we could look down the long, winding valleys of the Howqua and Delatite Rivers.

We were compelled to face a zigzag track and leave the saddle and woollybutt behind us. Snow gum relieved it as the altitude increased and then grew scantier and more stunted the higher we climbed. At last we reached the summit. A snow-grass plain spread before us. A line of snow-poles stalked

to tell Jacobson of the days of the notorious Kelly Gang.

Under better circumstances I could have stopped on top of Mt Howitt and drunk in a glorious intoxication of the greatest scenery in all the Alps. Motor roads have opened up the mountains for tourists, but no automobile will ever be able to convey sightseers to the summit of Howitt. Some day it may become a landing- and jumping-off ground for aeroplanists. As it was, there was supreme satisfaction in realising that one was remote from towns, alone with nature and not bearing a care or trouble in all the world. The banner of romance was mine and I loved to follow it into the remote.

'I never knew Australia had such beauty. My country never gave better than we see now', said Jacobson.

We came to a hole of shallow water infested by bullfrogs. Jacobson insisted on staying there to boil the billy and eat dinner. We gathered a few snow-gum twigs and built a fire. We tried to warm ourselves but failed. The wind at 5000 feet altitude on a shelterless tabletop defied our feeble fire to grant us

hospitality and dried our damp clothes itself. Shivering, we left the miniature fire and from our elevation as we walked we could trace a hundred narrow valleys as they dented the mountainside. These gullies all bear small streams that junction and form the Broken River, the Delatite, the Howqua and the King. For miles and miles we could follow with our eyes the course of those streams through settled regions that fall away towards the Murray. Southward, when we came to the other edge of Snowy Plains, we could trace the course of other rivers that fall away towards the Southern Ocean.

The clouds darkened and appeared [threatening], and as we began our descent rain was heavy upon us. It lost no time. From its commencement it poured a deluge and we and Hopping Joe were a forlorn trio. Jacobson had experienced it rough in all seas. He had battled for six weeks at a time of foul weather to round Cape Horn.

'I bin rough, rough, rough, before the mast, and I don't want to see it worse no more', he said. 'I think we make fire tonight.'

We descended as we had climbed the other side of the mount, by a zigzag track

tween us and the house. Suddenly we were attracted by cooee. We looked back and saw two men beckoning. We halted, and one of them overtook us.

'Where are you making for in weather like this?' he inquired.

'We're making for that heavy timber and shelter across the river', I answered.

'Don't bother about the timber across the river', he answered. 'We would not let our enemy's dog camp out tonight', he said. 'Come back.'

'We can't go into your house wet and dirty like this', Jacobson apologised, and I was of the same opinion.

'Don't let the state you are in worry you. We will lend you dry clothes, supply water to wash and fire to warm yourselves. No need to tell me of your rough trip. I know Mt Howitt only too well.'

We went into the stable, unpacked Hopping Joe, and while they fed him we changed our clothes for dry ones in the pack and hung our wet ones on the rails that divided the stalls.

Had Heaven come down to earth! I had never before struck a home where there

March as a rule, but it is three weeks early this year. You need not bother about the weather now. You must wait here until it settles properly again. We don't get many visitors in this out-of-the-way locality, and we keep them who call on us as long as we can.'

The dinner to which we sat down was one we could scarcely have expected to have greeted us on an alpine trip.

'I enjoy good tucker', said Alan Bryce. 'Of all the good things that we can enjoy during our three score and ten years nothing beats a good meal. We live in the lonely wilds it's true, but we don't live like blacks. Eat heartily and don't be timid about it—that's my motto.'

Dinner over, we all sat round the great fire and talked. 'Father was a miner in the early days', said the elder of the girls. 'He was among the first on Dargo. He did fairly well there. When the cream of Dargo was gone, he and his mate set out to prospect for a new field. They crossed the divide into the Wongungarra, then sunk shaft after shaft, but there did not seem to be much gold to be got. They crossed the divide again on to the Wonnangatta, to be further discouraged. Father was not a sleepy man. He noticed these flats and made up his mind that there was as much gold in grass as in gold, and there was no need to dig for it. He selected as soon as he could. Gold strikes haven't troubled him since.

'It was a big job to tackle the forest in those early days and settle down to a steady life after the excitement of gold-mining, but father managed to change his environment and here we are.

**'Some day the
summit of Mt
Howitt may become
a landing- and
jumping-off ground
for aeroplanists.'**



A 1934 photo of the Howitt Hut—on the route taken by the author during his epic alpine traverse in 1902. W Nicholls. **Background**, the author's handwriting.

through scanty snow gum and found it more sheltered as we descended through the woollybutt. At the bottom of the descent we found traces of the bush being humanised. There were flats running along the Wonnangatta, and these had been ringbarked. In some parts there was evidence that the fallen timber had been heaped and burned and some of the flats had been fenced off into paddocks. As we proceeded we walked over land that had been grubbed and cleared. In those grassy meadows were horses and cattle. Turning round a point of a hill that ran further down than the rest of the spurs, we spied a homestead. We decided that we would pass it and make a camp among the timber at the foot of a range on the other side of the river. We were not destined to succeed. We were almost past the homestead, keeping a stable and some barns be-

was such an effusive welcome. The people of Wonnangatta were hospitable without limit. The kitchen was spacious and a fire burned in a fireplace that was six feet wide. Half a dozen men were sitting around a table with books and papers before them. On the end of the table was a cinnabage board and a deck of cards. The men sat back and two young women cleared the table of its paraphernalia and spread a white, carefully ironed tablecloth on it. Soon a prodigious meal was spread and we were pressed to sit down to it.

A conversation was sprung on us and in less than an hour we were as though we had known each other for a decade.

'This rain means the breakup of the summer', said one of the girls. 'We'll get all good autumn weather from now for a month. The weather doesn't break before early in

Father was married at that time and when he built a hut he brought mother and two children (Dave and Alan) to their new home.

'He worked hard and employed labour to help when he could afford it. In a few years he had cattle grazing and breeding along the river, and later on he discovered the plains on top of Howitt. I can remember when these flats were little better than forests. It is not ten years since they grubbed the last of the trees out of the homestead paddocks. There used to be a high, old, dry tree between here and the river and there was an eagle nest in one of the top limbs. It used to be our target for rifle practice when there were no birds in it.

'It's a good home now, but it has been a lonely place at times. We boys and girls grew

up together and sometimes we lived as if we were all boys. We often used to ride to other places and visit other people, and in turn they used to ride over and visit us. We go to town now and again, and whoever goes dares not return without a lot of the latest books.

'With all the drawbacks that have beset us, I don't think there is one of our family who would abandon this sequestered hollow for the best station in Australia. Winter is the worst time with us. While it snows hard on Mt Howitt and the cattle have to be brought down to the lower land before winter sets in, it mostly rains on the river. We have known the time when it has rained every day for six weeks. We have seen the Wonnangatta flooded for all that time and we've never been able to get out. The Russians might have come here, or half the country be destroyed by an earthquake, and we not know of it. Once, back in the year 1894, we never got a letter nor a paper, nor heard from anyone for a whole two months.

'I sometimes think of the amount of literary material that has been going to waste in these Australian Alps. Henry Lawson understood a lot but he was ignorant of life in the mountains. Somewhere he said: 'I have battled myself and you know you coves what

the range. Take notice how soft and gentle the light penetrates the silence of the valley. I could never hope to have to live in level country. Hear the river! How rhythmic its murmur! In winter, when it floods, that gentle murmur breaks into a turbulent roar. It gives us to understand how savage and wild it is when provoked.

'When the hills are white with snow and the air is frosty, the stars shine like veritable diamonds and the moon crosses the valley like a disc of floating silver. Who would think as we stand here in the night that the Snowy Plains lie on top of yonder dark mountain.

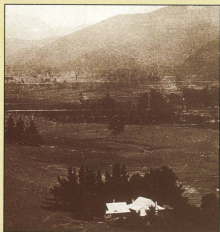
'Just behind the house—where you see that line of trickling silver—is Conglomerate Creek. It heads at the south edge of Snowy Plains, and in winter we hear it roaring all day and all night. It is the sonorous voice of Nature. Under yon dark pine are two graves. Our mother died a few years ago, and our sister died when she was a little girl. Father is growing pretty old and when he dies he, too, wishes to be laid to rest under the same sombre tree.'

Four days we stayed at Wonnangatta. It was a most enjoyable break in our journey. They invited us to dwell longer but time and pride would not permit. They loaded us

the horse while I walked ahead, surveying as it were the partly obliterated trail.

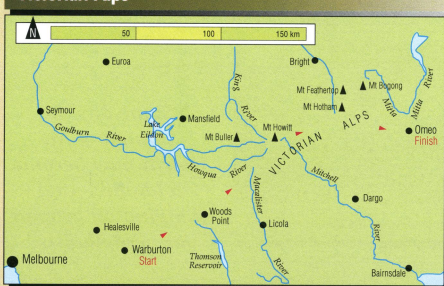
On top of a high hill we halted and made dinner. Our bread was soaked at the outside of the loaf and for an inch or more inside, but for all that we enjoyed our dinner.

Along the divide we came to a place where the weight of snow had broken down a forest of trees and the way was almost impossible. We tied Hopping Joe to a tree and climbed and crossed logs until we discovered what might be a way through. We went back and brought our horse along, and from the top of a bald peak looked over the tops of a thousand hills. The sun was declining, but it was the declination that lent grandeur to the mountain view. The innumerable distant summits were crowned with golden glory, while the valleys and ravines showed



The author stayed four days at Wonnangatta Station—pictured here in 1934, and destroyed by fire in 1959. Maurice Harkins

Victorian Alps



a man in the bush goes through." But he did not know fully. Paterson knew Kosciusko and the Snowy a bit. But what these Alps demand is a live writer, a man born of the Alps. We would give free board for 12 months to one who would guarantee to try and live life as we understand it and write wholeheartedly in poetry and prose. Talk about local colour—they'd find an abundance of it. I would act the part for a writer who would make me a heroine in a true mountain story.

'I wish the rain would clear away now. I'd take you outside and show you what sort of a delightful valley this is—it's easing a bit now. If the clouds break away we'll go out. Yes, the moon is beginning to peep through. Come out now. See, the moon is just over

with provisions, fruit and honey, and invited us to stay a month if ever we should be passing there again.

Beyond the Wonnangatta we had to cross a tributary named the Humphrey. We drove Hopping Joe into the water expecting that at his time of life he would have been possessed of enough horse sense to make to the opposite bank. But instead he turned upstream and walked into deep water. All our carefully prepared supplies were in danger of being destroyed. Even our blankets were soaked. We pelted him out and crossed ourselves, stepping from stone to stone at a narrow place above the ford.

'Better unpack and camp a day', suggested Jacobson, but I could not agree with him in that. We found the track and Jacobson led

us colour of a darker hue. The bright, rocky peaks of arabesque and gold were blended with the forested gullies. Truly the Australian Alps are picturesque.

We left that amazing landscape and in the evening descended the deep, dark valley of the Wonnangatta. Deep down between heavily timbered hills we saw the silver waters glittering and winding. There were no wide flats like those along the Howqua and Wonnangatta, and what limited flat land there was had suffered much devastation. We wandered up river along the narrow, burnt flats in search of feed for Hopping Joe. In our search we discovered that the river possessed two heads. A spur like a giant earth wedge split the stream in two as it were. Each fork was a miniature river in itself.

I built a roaring fire despite the fact that the day had been hot, and proceeded to dry our blankets and clothes. Jacobson sought a fishing hole down the river, and returned to supper with a solitary black fish. Supper over he went back to a line he had left set and relieved the Wonnangarra of another of its inhabitants.

We were in a world of our own. There is nothing to be compared with a mountain

river. In the valley, with our bedding dry, beside a roaring fire we turned in. The sweet cadences of the river murmured us to sleep. In such a delightful climate there were neither mosquitoes nor venomous insects to interrupt us. Occasionally a possum scratched the bark of a tree nearby or talked to his mates about the strange interlopers who were sleeping on the ground beneath them.

We enjoyed a matutinal in the cold, clear water and ate the fish Jacobson had caught. We discovered prospect holes in the flats where the miners of the early days had tried for rich alluvial. At the foot of a steep spur stood the remains of a prospector's hut that might have been built 40 years before.



Bill Hearne and Jim Fry looking down the Howqua River from Mt Howitt in 1927, 25 years after the author passed the same way. Trahair collection

The steep spur behind the remains of the old hut was the one we were to climb. Jacobson was energetic and took charge of Hopping Joe. I followed. It was a hard track. At one place the mountainside was scarcely removed from perpendicular. A narrow track had been cut but never repaired. Lying across this track so perpendicular as though standing on its head was a tree. One of the giants of the forest. The hillside was far too steep to pack Hopping Joe around it either above or below. Jacobson swore to compel the horse to jump over the huge log, but it knew better than to attempt it.

After much persuasion, and heated argument, Jacobson lost control of his temper. Picking up a strong stick he began to beat the horse over the head. Hopping Joe pulled back to avoid the second blow. In avoiding violence that was attempted the horse missed his footing and went down the steep decline backwards. It was the last of Hopping Joe. Backwards the horse rolled, feet in the air, then head and ears till he struck a tree.

'He's dead', exclaimed Jacobson. 'What will we do now?'

'Do?' said I. 'There's only one thing to do in such a fix. We'll have to leave him to the dingoes and pack ourselves. That's what happens when people like you attempt impossible things.'

We descended to where Hopping Joe was breathing his last, unloaded him and left him for a dingo's feast.

On top of a spur, almost exhausted, we came on a spring of water near some cattle yards on a clearing. Here we built a fire, dined and rested. Later when we felt revived we packed again. Dick Cow kept a hotel somewhere on the Dargo High Plains and towards evening we found his place. It was a desolate-looking mountain home all by itself

with an occasional snow gum scattered about. It overlooked a vast expanse of snow-grass country. The first sight of it engendered within me a feeling of maddening loneliness.

Two old men rested on the veranda and readily accepted our invitation to drink. They had not seen any other place but Dargo since they arrived there as young men. We talked to them and soon they gave us the history of Dargo. They knew it and all its roaring days. They told us of the times when men made fortunes in a day, spent them in a night and made fortunes the following day again.

'We are fairly imprisoned here in winter', said Dick Cow. They bring the mails from Dargo on snowshoes. It's 16 miles following the snow-poles. I have known men to perish in these mountains. Hundreds criticise this life but I enjoy it. I have a few head of cattle running about and the pub. These plains are good grazing for stock in summer. Before the winter I drive them down on to the river.'

Jacobson and I shared a room and, after an early breakfast, set out on another day of our peregrination. Descending from the High Plains we found ourselves against mountain

spurs and peaks and in mining country.

Down into the valley of the Dargo we fell. On the bank of the river we halted and, while the billy was boiling, undressed and laved in the cold mountain water. Dinner over, we tramped again, up the steep mountainside out of the Dargo.

On top of the mountain again we were on the backbone of Victoria. From here the rivers source and depart in different directions: the Livingstone to help to form the Mitta, which falls north to the Murray, the Dargo to swell the Mitchell and depart into the sea. For the remainder of the afternoon we travelled over better country, through lands where herds of cattle grazed. Late in the afternoon we made companions with a wagon road, the first one since we had left Hoskins on Mitchells Creek. We travelled till 9 pm when we came in sight of the lights of Ormeo. We called at a hotel where we were readily accommodated.

'It will be no trouble to lay out a supper', said the manageress. 'I have only to boil the kettle.' Soon the table was covered with cold meats, bread, jams and cakes. We discovered that it was not over difficult for bona fide travellers of our experiences to be served with liquor before supper. We were questioned as to where we had come from and, on answering, were accounted explorers.

'I have been on Dargo many a time', said one man, 'but I wouldn't care to try the track from there to Wonnaggatta. You have had that on your own.'

Ormeo was the town I desired to see more than any other. It was the distant place that had filled my heart with yearnings from early boyhood. It was towards its locality that I often strained my eyes looking across the ranges. I was to be one of very few who had reached it by way of Mt Howitt tracks. 📍

Alfred Wilson

was born in Sandford, Victoria, in 1876. Among other things, he gained a lay reader's licence and conducted services on the Victorian goldfields, took mail across the High Country on snowshoes, pioneered the Cariboo gold-rush on the Fraser River in Canada, and worked on coastal ships on the west coast of the USA. He visited almost every mining field in Australia and wrote of his travels in prose and poetry. After studying socialism he joined the Socialist Party in 1907 and became dedicated to his beliefs, working for the labour movement until his death in 1937 in Benalla, Victoria. He left behind his wife Kathleen (deceased) and two children, Verney (deceased) and Glen.



Alfred Wilson
C. W. Wilson

These excerpts were taken from the manuscript of *An Alpine Trek*, which was typed and edited by Alfred Wilson's granddaughter Brownen Thomas.

WORLD-CLASS CLIMBERS

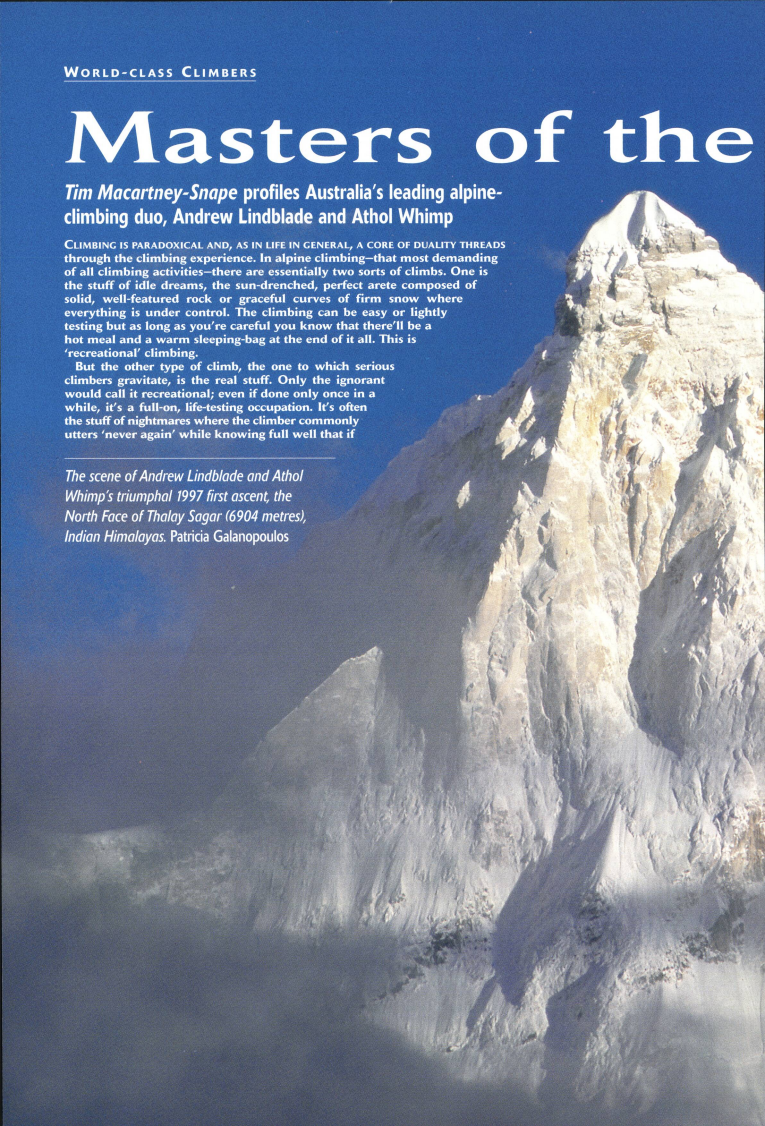
Masters of the

Tim Macartney-Snape profiles Australia's leading alpine-climbing duo, Andrew Lindblade and Athol Whimp

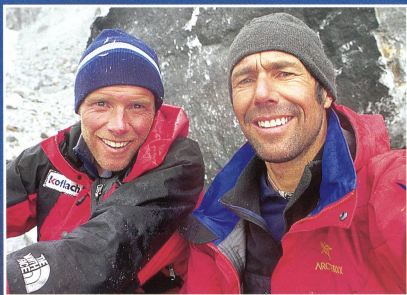
CLIMBING IS PARADOXICAL AND, AS IN LIFE IN GENERAL, A CORE OF DUALITY THREADS through the climbing experience. In alpine climbing—that most demanding of all climbing activities—there are essentially two sorts of climbs. One is the stuff of idle dreams, the sun-drenched, perfect arete composed of solid, well-featured rock or graceful curves of firm snow where everything is under control. The climbing can be easy or lightly testing but as long as you're careful you know that there'll be a hot meal and a warm sleeping-bag at the end of it all. This is 'recreational' climbing.

But the other type of climb, the one to which serious climbers gravitate, is the real stuff. Only the ignorant would call it recreational; even if done only once in a while, it's a full-on, life-testing occupation. It's often the stuff of nightmares where the climber commonly utters 'never again' while knowing full well that if

The scene of Andrew Lindblade and Athol Whimp's triumphal 1997 first ascent, the North Face of Thalay Sagar (6904 metres), Indian Himalayas. Patricia Galanopoulos



Mountains



Lindblade, left, and Whimp showing the strain of extreme climbing at altitude after their ascent of Jannu (7710 metres), Nepalese Himalayas.
Whimp collection



he or she survives the current epic he or she will inexorably be drawn back again.

Further, there are also two extremes of the sorts of character traits in people who are drawn to climbing. On one side is the escapist for whom climbing offers relief from self-confrontation—the so-called adrenaline junkie, who feeds on the threat of death as the ultimate high. On the other side is the explorer who engages in climbing as a metaphor, as a way of living out the internal struggle between self-knowledge and self-confrontation. In the middle is a trait mutually shared by these extremes of character—a need for self-affirmation and an expression of the frustration of the human condition. Climbers come in all shapes and sizes and in different mixtures of these traits. Climbing has been most meaningfully sustained when the trait of exploration and discovery is at the forefront. However, at present that side seems in danger of being subsumed by the other trait. Though equally valid, escapism is more suited to our entertainment, marketing, hype-engrossed, superficial age. It is perhaps timely therefore that two modern exponents of the exploratory aspect of climbing are the subject of this article.

In serious alpine climbing the preferred arena is on the steepest, shadiest mountain-sides—those which face the nearest pole. It's a shadowy world of unrelenting and bone-penetrating cold, of snow- and ice-covered handholds, of swirling spindrift and cloud, of a lonely, ledgeless, overhang-ridden wilderness where the climber struggles with hardened steel of ice-axe and crampon, bludgeoning them to bluntness, producing sparks to gain a tenuous hold. While fingertips throb from the pain of rewarming, muscles and lungs burn from straining effort and each move is a desperate attempt to foil gravity's relentless pull.

On earth's ultimate range, the Himalayas, these faces abound and are immeasurably more difficult—not just because of terrain or isolation but for the scarcity of life-giving oxygen. Of all the Himalayan north faces, that of 7710 metre Jannu in eastern Nepal is most revered for its severity. In the early morning of 5 May 2000 Athol Whimp and Andrew Lindblade—one of the firmest and most productive partnerships in modern climbing, a partnership motivated by a strong sense of exploration—sat in their portable ledge preparing for the day's climbing. Just big enough for the two of them to lie on and covered with a storm-proof fly, their ledge hung from one steel piton hammered into the loose rock. It was backed up with an ice-screw threaded into the sinuous seam of ice marking a shallow couloir (gully) that the pair hoped would lead them on to the upper headwall of the mountain. Below them dropped nearly 1000 metres of snow-dusted granite to the crevasse-cracked

Lindblade on the North Face of Jannu during his ascent in 2000 with Whimp.
Whimp

glacier; above rose the crux of the climb, 1600 metres of untouched mountain.

Just getting to their present position had been a three-week struggle. Frequent snowfall caused a constant barrage of spindrift to sweep their route, increasing their misery and forcing them to retreat twice, but it was nothing compared to what struck their vulnerable hanging shelter that morning. During the night there had been the odd warning clatter of minor rock- and ice-fall—it's a heart-stopping, loathsome sound that intensifies the loneliness and precariousness of life on a big mountain. As Lindblade was about to leave the shelter of the ledge and emerge into the grey dawn, they heard a



Whimp with the accoutrements of modern ice-climbing at a belay on the North Face of Jannu. Lindblade

clatter that rose to a roar before it was upon them. Lumps of rock and ice tore through the canopy of their shelter and in a few seconds of terror their retreat from the elements was shredded.

Miraculously, their anchors held and neither climber was hit. Three weeks of effort and the dream that had sustained them for more than a year were all but finished. Despite a deep emotional commitment to the climb they came to the conclusion—in a slow, shell-shocked way—that without their shelter they had little option but to retreat.

Even to set off up a Himalayan peak requires extraordinary motivation. It is difficult enough just to walk to the bases of those mountains let alone to go on to technically difficult terrain higher up, as those who have gasped their way up to base camps can attest. The required motivation can take years of momentum to build and, once set in motion, turning back is always emotionally difficult.

Instead of giving up completely the pair decided to attempt the route that takes the

left side of the face, aptly known as the Wall of Shadows. It had first been tried by a large team of New Zealanders in 1975; a year later a Japanese team spent months fixing 3000 metres of rope finally to claim the first ascent. The route has since been repeated in alpine style but remains at the forefront in terms of difficulty and commitment.

In order to succeed in the brief space between storms, Lindblade and Whimp's plan was to do it in their usual alpine style. Though Jannu was 800 metres higher than they had previously been, they were no strangers to climbing long and difficult routes without using fixed ropes or fixed camps. After three-and-a-half days of continuously steep climbing they were on the summit ridge, but the summit was far away along an intricate, corniced ridge. They spent a night out—just in what they were wearing, the altitude 7600 metres—and the next day they made the summit and got back down to their last camp well after dark. Physically

'Their remarkable success on two of the world's most difficult summits heralded a productive partnership.'

and psychologically they had been in a place where few had been before. As Lindblade puts it: 'Our time away from our top camp (6750 metres) to the summit and back was truly extraordinary for me, I felt as though I had moved into another world.' (See Whimp's article on Jannu in *Rock* no 45.)

In the winter of 1993, after having rock-climbed together for a couple of years at Mt Arapiles and the Grampians, both in Victoria, they made their first foray as a pair on to an alpine route. Their chosen route is indicative of their ambitious approach (see photo on page 66). In midwinter, after 'a bit of serious training', they traversed into the remote Balfour valley on the western side of the New Zealand Alps and climbed Mt Tasman's Balfour Face. It was Lindblade's first hard alpine route; it opened his eyes to what was possible and cemented a partnership that had already grown strong on the ochre rocks of western Victoria.

The ideal in alpinism is two people moving fast, efficiently and with a margin of safety (which soloing doesn't allow) and a lot of elements have to line up to make it successful. An approximately equal ability and motivation are the foundation but much of a successful climbing partnership depends on the development of a non-verbal link between individuals which operates in the invisible world of the subconscious. As Lindblade puts it, the link 'allows us to com-

CLIMBING CHRONOLOGIES

Atthol Whimp

Born in Christchurch, New Zealand, 1961.

Significant rock routes include Serpentine (29), Rage (29) and Contra Arms Pump (30), all in the Grampians, Victoria; Masada (29), Mt Arapiles, Victoria; The Nose (in a day), Yosemite, USA.

Landmark alpine climbs not accompanied by Andrew Lindblade:

1988 Link-up of the following routes in the Southern Alps, NZ, with Gavin Tweedie: North Face of Mt Hicks, Dampier, North Ridge of Mt Cook, Grand Traverse.

1994 Solo of Maestri or 'Compressor' Route on Cerro Torre, Patagonia; Mt Tasman, Southern Alps, NZ.

1996 Solo link-up of McInnes Ridge of Nazomi, South Ridge of Mt Cook, and Grand Traverse, Southern Alps, NZ.

Andrew Lindblade

Born in Adelaide, 1971.

Landmark rockclimbs in his personal progression:

1989 Henry Bolte (25) and Los Endos (22), both at Mt Arapiles.

1990 The Fortress (26), Mt Arapiles.

1991 Slinkin's Leopard (28), Delirium Tremens (24) and Exodus II (27), all at Mt Arapiles.

1992 Serpentine (29).

1993 Masada (29).

1994 Angular Perspective (28) and Monkey Puzzle (28), both in the Grampians.

1995 Rage (29), Contra Arms Pump (30) and Journey Through Nicaragua (30), all in the Grampians.

1997 Daniel Or-Tiger (30), Grampians.

Significant alpine climbs by Lindblade and Whimp

1993 Balfour Face of Mt Tasman in winter.

1994 Patagonia: The first complete ascent of the Pedrini/Locher route on the North Pillar of FitzRoy; Maestri or 'Compressor' Route (South-east Pillar) on Cerro Torre.

1995 Central Buttress, and Earle's Route on Sheila Face of Mt Cook, Southern Alps, NZ.

1996 Indian Himalayas, attempt on Thalay Sagar North Face. Reached 6350 metres.

1997 Thalay Sagar. First ascent of North Face. Mt Cook North Ridge in winter with a forced bivouac near the summit for the night without gear. South Face of Mt Hicks.

1999 Desolation Row on South Face of Mt Hicks.

2000 Attempt on Jannu North Face direct, Himalayas. Alpine-style ascent of Wall of Shadows, Jannu.

Significant rockclimbs by Lindblade and Whimp

1994 Yosemite: Free ascents of North-west Face of Half Dome, Chouinard/Herbert on the Sentinel, West Face of El Capitan. The Nose on-sight in 15-and-a-half hours (not free).

municate without saying much, there is implicit trust in each other in stressful situations, there's an absence of frustration or anger'.

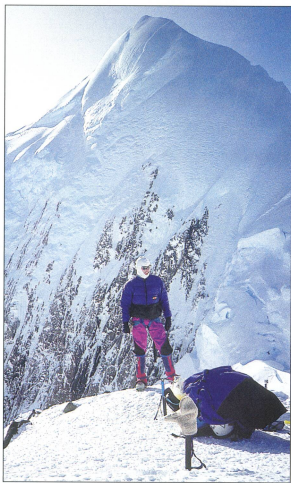
While Whimp was a more experienced alpine climber, he felt confident taking Lindblade on to one of New Zealand's renowned hard climbs; obviously there was an effective transmission of skill and technique. The following summer, lured by magazine articles and climbing documentaries, they pulled off the first Australian ascents of FitzRoy and Cerro Torre in Patagonia, South America. While they were undoubtedly lucky with the notoriously savage weather in the 'Land of Tempest'—as Shipton aptly called it—their remarkable success on two of the world's most difficult summits heralded a productive partnership. Of the first complete ascent of the aesthetic Pedrini/Locher route on FitzRoy's North Pillar—a long, gruelling route that entailed three nights in the open without sleeping-bags or -mats—Whimp says, 'It was a fun route on which we had a really good time... amazing rock, such extraordinary conditions, it was just beautiful'. The cruel, unspeakably uncomfortable nights always overhung with the grim threat of storm and the palm-sweating fear of sketchy moves above long run-outs are quickly forgotten; if they were not, it is doubtful that even the toughest would have a long alpine career. After climbing the classic Maestri or 'Compressor' Route on Cerro Torre, Lindblade went home but Whimp stayed on, fired up to test his skill at soloing the same route. He made three thwarted attempts in three weeks before succeeding on the fourth, taking 13 hours to make the second-ever solo ascent of Cerro Torre.

Now truly inspired by what they could do, Whimp took more time off from his property development business in Melbourne and Lindblade stretched out his Honours in English at Melbourne University even further so that together they could make a pilgrimage to the modern rockclimbing Mecca of Yosemite valley in the USA. They climbed a selection of classic big-wall routes, each one successively longer until their last, the most famous of them all—The Nose—was climbed in a blistering 15-and-a-half hours.

Their first Himalayan experience was in the Garhwal region of India in the autumn of 1996 (see article in *Wild* no 64). From the valleys above the pilgrim town of Gangotri rise some of the most coveted climbing routes in mountaineering, routes that have been a focal point for hard-core alpinists since the late 1970s. None was more coveted or has been subjected to more failures than the North Face of Thalay Sagar (6904 metres).

A cover shot on an old climbing magazine, which showed in full its great symmetry

and aesthetic spearhead shape, had given Whimp the initial inspiration to climb it. But thwarted by snowfall and intense cold (which gave Lindblade frostbitten feet which fortunately recovered), their first attempt ended halfway up the mountain. That far north in the Himalayas, autumn is frigid, so bivouacs are a far more serious proposition than in Patagonia. You need decent shelter and to sleep in a bag but Thalay Sagar's North Face was so unrelenting that it did not even afford them the luxury of a ledge. Every surface was covered in snow or smeared in ice, none of it deep enough to allow the smallest ledge for their little tent. 'We quickly realised that to get anywhere on this kind of route we needed a Portaledge but we didn't have one.'



Mt Tasman's Balfour Face, one of New Zealand's most formidable faces, was climbed in winter 1993 by Lindblade and Whimp, and soloed by Whimp in 1996. Lindblade is in the foreground. Whimp

The following year they returned with a Portaledge.

Being a true north face it gets little or no sun; the frequently falling snow sits on every little ledge while the ice builds up during the warmer but unclimbable conditions of the monsoon, filling every crack. The temperature hovered around -20°C. Halfway up they were hammered by a two-day storm that sent tonnes upon tonnes of

spindrift down on them. What saved them was the steepness; if it had been lower angled the snow would have cut loose less frequently but more massively, taking them with it. Back in 1991 a Hungarian expedition climbed a slanting line up the face but totally avoided the crucial, loose and vertical shale headwall. Even so they complained of terrible climbing conditions, of loose, iced-up rock. Used to climbing in New Zealand, where shattered, loose rock is absolutely normal and where severe storms regularly blast in from the Southern Ocean, Lindblade and Whimp thought the shale that had given so much grief to so many others was 'not so difficult'. Despite the incessant storms they forged a direct route all the way to

the summit (see article in *Rock* no 33) and earned themselves a place in mountaineering history in more ways than one.

Their landmark achievement was rewarded with a nomination for the *Piolet d'Or*, a prestigious award for the greatest climb of the year sponsored jointly by the French climbing magazine *Montagnes* and *Groupe de Haute Montagne*. With the nomination came an invitation to attend the award ceremony in France. While such recognition by the international climbing community was gratifying, Lindblade and Whimp were not in a position to afford air fares for such a jaunt. Then came a phone call insisting that they must attend because, as a matter of fact, they had been chosen to win the award! With the magazine covering their expenses they flew non-stop, arriving half an hour after the award ceremony had begun. It was an interesting experience. The French take their climbing as seriously as their wine and who has heard of the French giving awards to foreign wines? A respected guide introduced himself and half-jokingly warned them not to expect any local hotshots to congratulate them as the *Piolet d'Or* was traditionally a very French affair. He was right; the world-class climbers from down under, the first outsiders to win the award, were on the whole coolly received.

In a sense Lindblade, aged 29, and Whimp, aged 39, are an anomaly. They represent the leading edge of modern climbing but their sort of climbs were done far more frequently 10 to 20 years ago. They are both quick to voice their dismay that mountaineering standards seem to have gone backwards in the last decade or so. The emphasis no longer seems to be on the quality of routes climbed but on the quantity. Peak bagging—rather than pushing new routes or repeating classic ones—seems



to be the order of the day. 'You could say climbing as a whole has become less interesting, boring even, yet there is so much interesting climbing to be done and repeated', says Whimp. And it's not that they are narrow-minded about climbing; their skills and interests are as well rounded as they could be. To climb the routes they have, you must excel on rock as well as on ice.

Whimp and Lindblade first met at the 'Pines', Mt Arapiles' camping ground—which

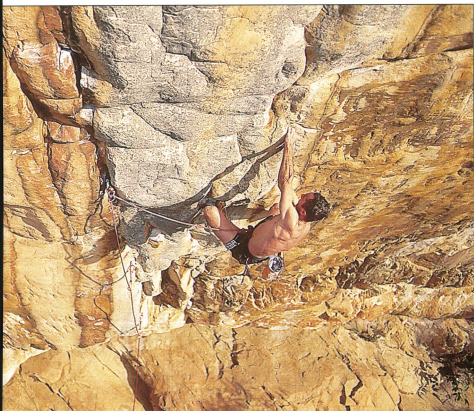
inspiration from their mastery, and progressed through the moderately difficult routes to upper-grade climbs such as Slinkin' Leopard (grade 28) and Serpentine (grade 29) within a few, short years.

At Mt Arapiles Lindblade also met New Zealander Jeremy Strang, who introduced him to alpine climbing in New Zealand. Compared to the European Alps or some of the mountains of North America, New Zealand's Southern Alps have neither the diversity nor the size of big routes but this

Two years into the studies for his degree—and bored with it—he passed the rigorous SAS selection course and left his studies to become the youngest officer in the New Zealand Army's SAS. Still not fully satisfied, he resigned his commission and became the youngest captain in the Sultan of Oman's Army, working as the commander of a Landrover-mounted reconnaissance company, patrolling the Saudi Arabian and Yemeni borders. After more than two years he became responsible for the operations of 1000 men but resigned after what he considered to be incompetence by some senior officers during operations against the enemy forces.

He'd started climbing at university but it wasn't until his stint in Oman that he really began to feel the pull of the mountains. He went on climbing holidays to the European Alps, and Nepal, where he climbed the trekking peak Tharpu Chuli. Returning to Christchurch in 1987, he took up climbing more seriously. Since then, in the Mt Cook area alone, he has done more than 35 routes including 18 ascents of Mt Cook.

As this article goes to print Lindblade is working for an advertising agency in New York while putting the finishing touches to a book about his climbing experiences, *Expeditions*. He keeps fit with the occasional icy run through Central Park and is looking forward to taking up an offer of ice-climbing in New



Extreme rockclimbing ability has held the partnership in good stead in the high mountains: Whimp at grips with one of the harder climbs in Victoria; Contra Arms Pump (grade 30), Mt Stapylton, the Grampians. Matt Darby

has long been a pot-pourri of climbers from all over the world—when Whimp crossed the Tasman Sea for a rockclimbing holiday in 1991. Lindblade's interest in climbing had been sparked by alpine bushwalking in his year at Geelong Grammar's Timbertop campus in the Victorian Alps when he was fourteen. When his family moved to a farm at the base of the You Yangs, between Melbourne and Geelong, Lindblade and his friends took to climbing the range's granite boulders with youthful enthusiasm. As for many climbers of that age, climbing soon became an all-consuming passion. Whenever time off from school and university allowed, he lived at places such as Mt Arapiles and the Grampians, learning from the likes of 'HB' (Malcolm Matheson) and Simon Parsons. Climbing with partners so much more experienced and focused would overwhelm some but Lindblade, secure and focused in his quiet way, wasn't intimidated. Instead, he seemed to draw

lack is perhaps compensated for by its ferocious weather and rugged, remote approaches. It is arguably a better training ground for the gruelling self-sufficiency needed to succeed in the Himalayas.

Born and brought up in New Zealand, a wild and mountainous landscape was always in the background of Whimp's life but he didn't seriously take to climbing until much later. His parents were both active trampers and had a 'hut' in the mountains near Arthurs Pass where they spent their holidays ever since Whimp could remember. Like Lindblade, he started bushwalking at high school but when he progressed to deer hunting his adventures became decidedly more challenging, giving him a wealth of experience in coping efficiently with rugged, remote terrain and whatever the South Island's wild weather could throw at him. At university he studied geology but for excitement he joined the Territorial Army and became an infantry officer.

Tim Macartney-Snape

lives in the bush near Mittagong, New South Wales, where sandstone outcrops provide reasonable climbing. Still addicted to remote parts of the Himalayas, he returns every year, generally with a group of World Expedition clients, to explore new ground and climb the odd 6000 metre peak, preferably by a new route. He's a part-owner of Sea to Summit Pty Ltd and a founding director of the Foundation for Humanity's Adulthood.



England, USA, with friends made at Thalay Sagar Base Camp. Whimp headed off to spend Christmas with his family in New Zealand and was hoping to do some alpine rock-climbing in the Darran Mountains of Fiordland.

If all goes well, their climbing future is certain to be prolific and they will most probably reach even higher peaks. Indeed, not one difficult, direct line on a good-looking peak anywhere would seem safe from them at this stage. Sometime, someone might make it directly up the direct route they were forced off on Jannu—perhaps in winter or late autumn when the face is frozen solid—but their recovery from near-disaster and their eventual triumph on the Wall of Shadows, along with their Thalay Sagar climb, will go down in history with the greatest of Himalayan exploits. ☼

Reflections on a Walking Life

Lonely Planet co-founder *Tony Wheeler* muses on some of his most memorable walks

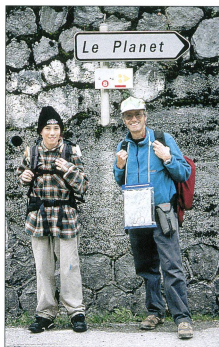
THE DOORMAN, RESPLENDENT IN BLACK suit, white shirt and bow-tie, hoisted my sweaty rucksack and marched off. I followed obediently, fishing in my pocket for a suitable tip.

Not every day's walk ends in quite such a luxurious fashion, but—if you can afford the price tag—it's an option available on the Cotswold Way in the south of England. Winding north-south through the Cotswold Hills, the walk starts just south of William Shakespeare's home town, Stratford-upon-Avon, and ends up a week or so later in the Victorian spa town of Bath. Not far south of the starting point is the picturesque

coast route following Hadrian's Wall (I like a country across which you can walk in less than a week) and the Pennine Way, probably the best-known, long-distance walking path in the country. Those British tracks varied from bleak expanses of moor—the Pennine Way crosses those 'blasted heaths' Heathcliffe wandered over in *Wuthering*

this really was a little Eden, the only snake of the walk made an appearance at the same moment.

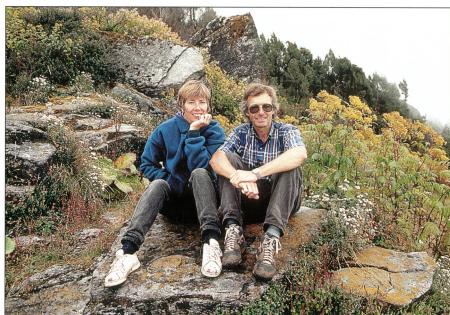
For more than ten years now I've tried to spend at least a week or two each year walking, and those walks have taken me everywhere from Mt Kailash (in Tibet) to Mont Blanc (on the French-Italian border)



The author with his son Kieran at Le Planet, Mt Blanc circuit, France, 1995. For more than ten years, Tony has tried to spend at least a week or two each year walking. Elizabeth Clarke

(almost too picturesque for its own good) village of Broadway, where the stately Lygon Arms lays claim to being one of Britain's most luxurious country hotels. It seemed like an interesting place in which to stay overnight.

In the mid-1990s I did several other long-distance British walks including the coast-to-



Lonely Planet founders Maureen and Tony Wheeler, on their 21st wedding anniversary, above Tarke Gyang, Helambu circuit, Nepal, 1992. Tony Wheeler collection

Heights—to the affluent, tamed, immaculately manicured and sometimes slightly twee countryside of the Cotswolds. Along the way I stayed in everything from youth hostels and bed and breakfasts to that comfortable, if pricey, night in Broadway.

Jay Creek—a couple of days' walk west of Alice Springs on the Northern Territory's Larapinta Trail—was a lot cheaper but arguably just as relaxing. We'd arrived comfortably before sunset and set up camp. As the coffee brewed, flights of budgerigars entertained us by zapping back and forth across the creek like dazzling, green ping pong balls. We hadn't seen another walker for more than 60 kilometres but two women walkers turned up a few minutes later, pausing for a cup of our excellent coffee before continuing further along the creek to set up camp. As though to underline that

to Cradle Mountain (what's the name of that island off to the south?) They were all different, all enjoyable and amazingly varied. Corsica, for example: is it possible at the beginning of the 21st century to do a walk in France which necessitates carrying food for four days on one stretch? Of course, being part of France—even if it is a Mediterranean island—you can rest assured that you'll stumble upon a little summer season shepherd's hut just a kilometre or two before the night's camp-site where you can purchase a bottle of slightly rough, but quite drinkable, *vin ordinaire* to complement the freeze-dried pasta perfectly.

The GR20, the 'grande randonnée' which I followed down the mountainous and rocky spine of Corsica, also provided one of the great views of my walking career. It's hard to imagine a more spectacular sight than

the descent and ascent through the Cirque de la Solitude, which walkers come across on Stage 4 of this wonderful track. Of course, there have been lots of close contenders: crossing the Nara Lagna pass out of Nepal where the sere, treeless sweep of Tibet comes into view to confirm that you are now most definitely north of the Himalayas. That wonderful view back from Cradle Mountain over Lake Dove, shimmering far below. The villages of Cinque Terre (Five Lands), connected by a very busy walking path along Italy's Ligurian coast but so impossibly pretty that it's hard to believe they didn't create the postcards on some computer design program, then built the villages to match.

Is there a walk that does you more good than the circuit of holy Mt Kailash, western Tibet's great pilgrimage route? Not only do you cross a pass a bit higher than the Mt Everest Base Camp; you also come back physically as well as morally strengthened. One circuit of the sacred mountain is sufficient, the Tibetans insist, to wipe out all the sins of your lifetime. Of course, wiping out all the sins of all your lifetimes is a much bigger task; that major sin clean-up requires 108 revolutions.

'One circuit of the sacred Mt Kailash is sufficient, the Tibetans insist, to wipe out all the sins of your lifetime.'

Walking can whisk you back through history, following the footsteps of pilgrims who have passed by over the centuries, or remind you that once upon a time walking was the principal way for people to get from A to B. In the foothills of Nepal the trekking tracks are still the main means of communication but even in England many footpaths arrive in villages by peculiar back-door entrances which would have been trodden by medieval wayfarers centuries before modern roads appeared.

Sometimes a walk can even, in a curious fashion, reflect some totally non-walking element of the country. Over the years I've come across the odd leech on walks as far apart as Nepal and the Blue Mountains near Sydney, but my right foot still bears the faint circular reminder of the only Japanese leech which ever sucked my blood. It occurred ten years ago on remote Iriomote



The author with a hotel sign in Agra, India, 1999. Like Wild Publications, Lonely Planet is a long-standing, independent, Australian publisher. It published its first travel guide in 1973, eight years before Wild was first published. Richard I'Anson

jima, at the southern end of the island chain pointing down from Japan towards Taiwan, and every time I notice that tell-tale leech mark I think, 'wow, even their leeches are reliable and built to last.' 🐛

Tony Wheeler was born in the UK but grew up in Pakistan, the West Indies and the USA. With his wife Maureen he turned up on Western Australia's North West Cape on a New Zealand yacht and went on to found Lonely Planet Publications. The rest—as they say—is travel history.



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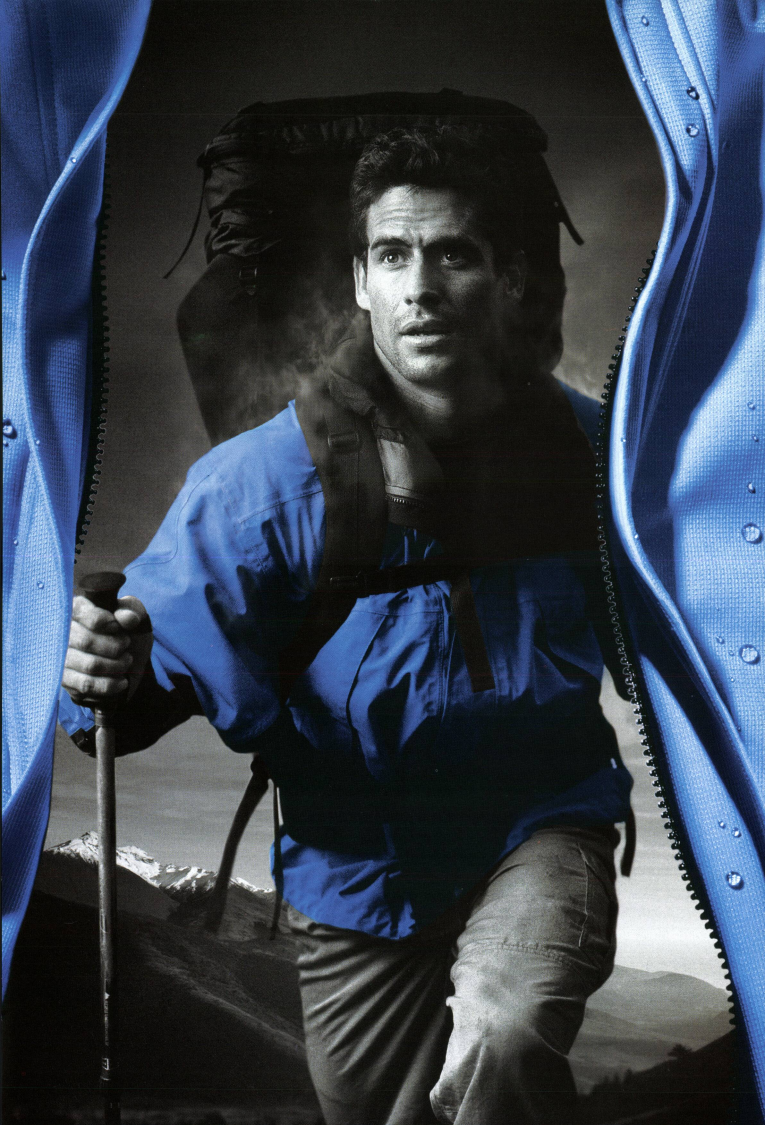
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Howitt high country

Off track in some of Victoria's best alpine country, by Glenn

THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS TRACK notes in *Wild* for walks in the Mt Howitt region. And deservedly so. This area of the Victorian Alps has some of the most spectacular mountain scenery you'll find anywhere in Australia. The craggy, high summits of Mts Speculation, Howitt and Magdala have attracted walkers for years, and the Crosscut Saw will always remain one of Victoria's most popular ridge walks.

To add something a bit different to a traverse of these peaks, this walk gains the summits by climbing the pretty and untracked Queen Spur to Mt Buggery, then ends with a descent of Helicopter Spur by way of a difficult rock scramble (not for the faint-hearted). In between these spurs there aren't any navigational hassles, and the route provides few problems other than some sharp climbs and descents.

The described walk is easily accomplished in three days—the toughest walking is on the first and last days—and there are some spectacular views, particularly on the second day when most of the walking is above the tree line.

When to go

Between June and October much of the upper route can be under snow, and the access roads are closed to vehicular traffic. November to May is therefore the best and most popular time. Extreme alpine conditions can occur in the cooler months; nights can be chilly even during summer. Water is reliable at the camp-sites mentioned except in the driest of times, and wild flowers are prolific in summer.

Safety

It is important to remember that the descent of Helicopter Spur is potentially hazardous—a few rocky bluffs need to be negotiated in the upper section, and in wet conditions this descent could pose more than a few problems.

Be aware that much of this walk is above the tree line and is therefore exposed to severe weather. It is essential that you carry enough drinking-water for each day as few water-points are found after leaving the valley. Finally, carry a map and compass, especially for use on the first and last days should thick fog engulf you on the untracked spurs.

Map

The *Howitt–Selwyn* 1:50 000 Vicmap sheet covers the whole walk.



Mt Buggery (visible in the background) can be reached by the pretty, untracked Queen Spur (foreground). A stiff scramble on the upper spur deposits you on the summit of Mt Buggery. Glenn van der Knijff

Further reading

Have a look at *Victoria's Alpine National Park* by John Siseman, and Lonely Planet's *Walking in Australia*; both guidebooks have descriptions of bushwalks in the Mt Howitt region.

Access

From the town of Mansfield (192 kilometres north-east of Melbourne) follow the

Mt Buller road east for 40 kilometres to Mirimbah and turn left on to the Stirling road. At Telephone Box Junction—eight kilometres away—keep right on the Circuit road and follow this for 19 kilometres to the junction with the Bindaree road, which joins from the south.

The Bindaree road descends to the Howqua valley. Once in the valley, the road deteriorates and its name changes to the Upper Howqua road. This walk would normally start at the grassy clearing at the base of the

traverse

an der Kniff



Howitt Spur, but a recent flood has washed away the old, rickety bridges in the valley and you will therefore start at the river crossing two kilometres west of the Howitt Spur. It is planned to replace the bridges.

The walk

Ford the Howqua River and follow the road east for two kilometres to a track junction at the Howitt Spur, crossing the river twice more. Turn left on to the Queen Spur road, fording the river again, and follow the road up the southern slopes of the Thorn Range to cross the ridge at a saddle. Avoid any side tracks and stay on the road as it crosses the head of King River South Branch (you can usually find water here). After passing a

gully the road swings north-west and climbs a little before joining Queen Spur at a broad saddle. Leave the road here and follow the crest of the spur east—there is a faint footpad in places—as it climbs toward Mt Buggery. There is a little scrub higher up, but the climbing is not unduly difficult for the most part. A stiff scramble on the upper spur deposits you on the tree-covered summit of Mt Buggery where you join the heavily used Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT).

A steep descent north leads into Horrible Gap. Beyond this saddle the route climbs through thick forest at first and then in more open country as you approach the summit of Mt Speculation. The ridgeline just before the summit provides a beautiful camp-site (except in foul weather) with a

wonderful view. The view south and east from the summit is especially impressive when morning fog settles in the upper Wonnangatta valley. Without fog, you can see some of the cleared farmlands of the historical Wonnangatta Homestead down the valley.

In bad weather, or during busy periods such as summer and Easter, you could camp below the summit (about 500 metres to the east) where there are more excellent camp-sites—these also have good views but provide greater shelter. A reliable water source is the head of Camp Creek, one kilometre north-east of the summit along a well-defined track; it's a 45 minute walk from the summit for the return trip.

Day two

Retrace your steps to Mt Buggery. A short, steep descent south from the summit leads to a steady climb over rocky terrain towards the Crosscut Saw. Steep in places, a traverse of the Crosscut Saw is none the less an exciting prospect, with dramatic views increasing as you gain altitude. About two and-a-half kilometres from Mt Buggery, the track drops into a saddle where the walking track from Stanley's Name Spur joins from the west.

Continue along the main track as it sidles left and into another saddle before climbing on to a plateau north-east of Mt Howitt. Here a faint track heads east—away from

the walk AT A GLANCE

Grade	Moderate-hard
Length	Three days
Type	Mountain scenery; alpine-ash and snow-gum forests
Region	Victorian Alps
Best time	Late spring to early autumn
Special points	Includes some tough walking on two untracked and rocky spurs

the main route—towards Macalister Springs and Vallejo Gantner Hut (and further to the Howitt Plains). Stay on the main track as it climbs gently south, then south-west, to the summit of Mt Howitt. Again, this is another fine viewpoint.

The route now heads west across the summit plateau. At a T-junction the AAWT

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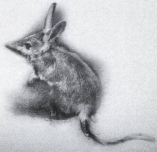
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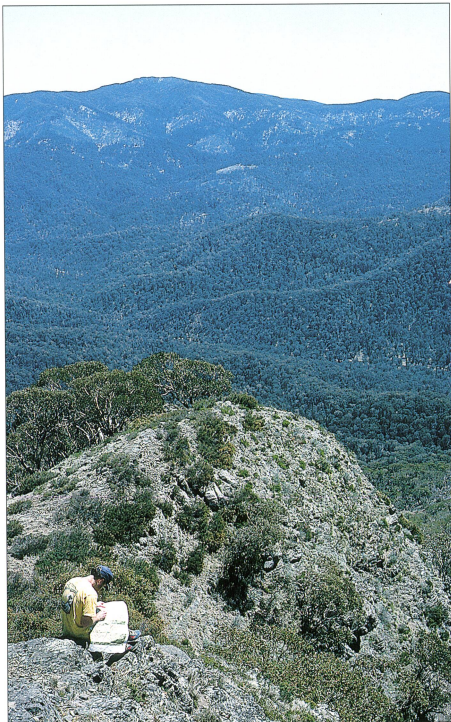
Rufous hare-wallaby. Gilbert's potoroo. Baw Baw frog. We'd be the first to admit that they aren't names that grab the headlines. However, they're just three of Australia's thousands of endangered species whose survival is crucial to our fragile ecosystem. The World Wide Fund For Nature is Australia's largest and most experienced conservation organisation. Working with governments, businesses and communities, WWF Australia is finding solutions to these problems through collaboration rather than confrontation. Call WWF on 1800 032 551 or visit our Web site at www.wwf.org.au and help us to save life on earth. Both great and small.

heads south; the track heading west continues over West Peak, then dives into the forest on the Howitt Spur to reach the Howqua River. Follow the main route south into a saddle, then climb on to Big Hill before descending to a broad saddle east of Mt Magdala. This is an excellent, sheltered camp-site and water can be found in the headwater of Hellfire Creek along a track due south of the saddle.

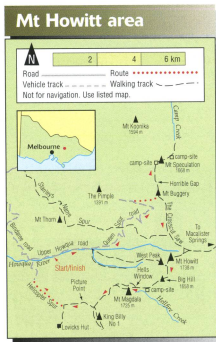
Day three

A stiff climb west towards Mt Magdala begins the day. Partway up you pass Hells Window, a cleft in the ridge framing a good view of the Howqua valley and peaks beyond. A short climb, much easier now, then brings you to the summit of Mt Magdala. In foggy conditions the summit can be bypassed by a track which leaves the main track below Hells Window and sidles the northern slope of the mount to rejoin the northern slope of the mount to rejoin the main track west of the summit.

Descend west from the summit. Where the grade eases you may notice the 'bad weather' route (mentioned above) joining from the right. The route continues to descend generally west into a saddle, then climbs steadily to join the Bluff track on the ridgetop north of King Billy No 1. The AAWT heads south here, but turn right and follow the Bluff track north-west, then west, past Picture Point. Just before reaching Helicopter Spur, the Bluff track swings south



A walker consults his map above Helicopter Spur before descending to the Howqua River valley below. 'This is an exciting spur—not for those fearful of heights...' Chris Baxter



and descends toward Lovicks Hut. Leave the track here and walk west along the grassy spur for a few hundred metres to the head of Helicopter Spur.

The spur heads north-west and drops away steeply. You may find a rough foot-pad in places, but it is not easy to follow; fortunately, the scrub is not thick. You will soon come to a rocky escarpment—the first obstacle. I found the easiest route was to head a little to the east side of the spur,

then scramble through the bluffs. You should be able to see where previous walking parties have found a way. As mentioned earlier, this is an exciting spur—not for those fearful of heights—but it would be quite dangerous under wet conditions.

After this first obstacle, you will soon come to another similar one. Again, veer to the east to find a way down. Once below these bluffs, the route eases considerably and has occasional views of the valley below.

Not long after entering the alpine-ash forest you join an old logging road which

soon improves into a four-wheel drive track. Avoid any side tracks and stay on the main track which drops steadily to cross the Howqua River and reaches the Upper Howqua road. Turn east and follow the road for one kilometre to the end of the walk at the washed-out bridge. 🚗

Glenn van der Krieff is a keen bushwalker, cross-country skier and alpine historian. A qualified cartographer, he has worked for well-known but now defunct Victorian map and guidebook publisher Algonia Publications. He spent eight years at *Wild* before joining the staff at Lonely Planet.

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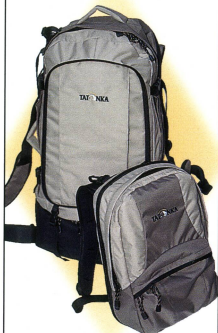
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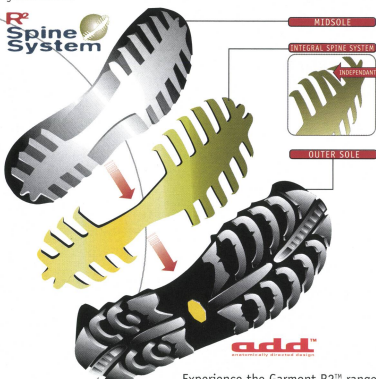
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Bushwalking boots

Scott Drummond tells how you can find the perfect sole mate

NO OTHER PIECE OF GEAR CAN INFLICT AS much pain and suffering nor engender as much attachment and devotion as a pair of bushwalking boots. It can be a love-hate relationship in the true sense of the word.

Indeed, a good pair of boots may even outlast a relationship! No wonder they come at quite a cost.

Outdoors shops have a large range of high-quality boots at present. Many boots are extraordinarily technical and have many features—almost enough to warrant operating manuals; other models are classic, no-frills types.

Bushwalking boots designed for overland adventures in all kinds of conditions are the primary focus of this survey.

The table contains up to three representative models of each brand surveyed. It is not exhaustive. A number of brands are not included in the survey—chiefly because they are not widely available. Meindl (www.stagersport.com), Bunyip (www.bunyipboot.com), Karrimor (www.karrimor.com) and Merrell, among others, make some terrific boots but they can be hard to find. Rockport and Timberland are more widely available but their ranges, for the most part, are more suitable for travel. Check the Web pages for local stockists or enquire at retailers.

Some brands were omitted because they were more suitable for European streets than for the Australian bush. 'Approach shoes', which are an emerging category of footwear, were left out for this reason.

Suitable for

While you can bushwalk in just about anything (the plastic sandal of Himalayan porters or the ever-present Dunlop Volley come to mind) some boots are better in certain conditions.

All-weather, off-track walking boots are shown as the 'multi-day' boots in the table. These boots were the heaviest surveyed—excellent for long treks through creeks, mud, glaciers, and so on, but less suitable for a summer day-walk.

'Weekend' boots are lighter and less 'aggressive' in design. While

perfect for an overnight hike, nothing stops you from using this variety of boot on an extended walk—indeed, some may prefer it. Plenty of walkers prefer the snug fit and shorter break-in period of these boots.

The 'day' tag is reserved for lightweight, low-cut boots—in some cases they seem closer to the sneaker than the boot. Best suited to day walks in warm weather and on smooth tracks.

Weight

For consistency, we weighed one boot (size 41) of each pair on the same set of electronic scales unless otherwise stated. Readers should note that a size-41 boot is large for a woman. A medium-size women's boot weighs much less than that stated in the table.

Sole design

Sole design refers to the number of layers between the foot and the ground. Most bushwalking boots are multilayered, commonly having a tough carbon rubber outsole with a softer rubber mid-sole for cushioning. Many comprise a shank (see Glossary) to control flexibility.

Ankle height

A 'mid-ankle' rating is given to those boots that reach a point at—or very close to—the ankle ball. 'Above ankle' is just that.

Upper material

Leather (full-grain, split, suede, brushed, proofed, Nubuck...), synthetic, plastic, and a host of trade-name materials greets the prospective boot buyer examining uppers. It's confusing. Some uppers are comprised totally of trade names!

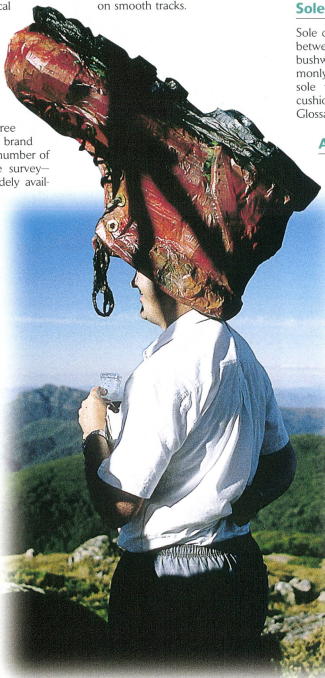
For simplicity, the 'leather' rating is given to boots when more than 90 per cent of the upper is leather, whatever the style. 'Combination' refers to the combination of leather and synthetic materials; the 'synthetic' rating is given to boots when the upper is man-made.

Flexibility

High, medium, low. As a rule, stiffer boots are more suited to rocky, uneven ground. Highly flexible boots suit smooth terrain.

Waterproofness

Instead of waterproofness this column should perhaps read, 'speed at which your foot will inevitably get wet'. If you are walking in the rain or crossing creeks don't expect your feet to



If the boot fits... John Chapman

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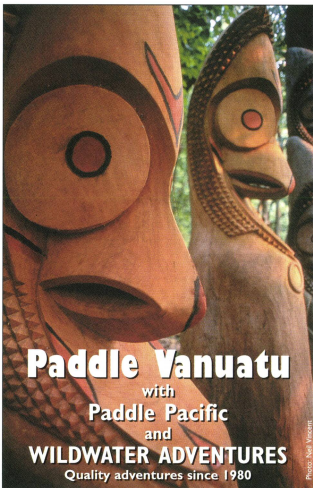
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Bushwalking boots

		Suitable for	Weight, grams	Sole design	Ankle height	Upper material	Flexibility	Waterproofness	Durability	Value	Comments	Approx price, \$
Aku Italy												
	Trail	Weekend	580	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Combination	High	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●	Gore-Tex lined	220
	◀ Taiga	Weekend/Multiday	660	As above	Above ankle	As above	High	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●	As above	270
	Granite Gore-Tex	Multiday	785	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Medium	●●●	●●●	●●●1/2	As above	360
Armond Italy												
	◀ Morbegno 1 fl	Multiday	725#	Single-layer	Above ankle	Leather	na	na	na	na		260
Asolo Italy												
	Rain Gtx §	Weekend/multiday	570	Two-layer	Above ankle	Leather	High	●●1/2	●●	●●1/2	Gore-Tex lined	250
	Storm Gtx	As above	585	As above	Above ankle	Leather	High	●●1/2	●●	●●1/2	As above	250
	AFX 520 GV	Multiday	740	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Low-medium	●●●	●●●	●●●	As above	370
Blundstone Australia												
	◀ Style 208	Weekend	750#	Single-layer	Above ankle	Leather	High	●●	●●1/2	●●●	Functional without frills	130
Columbia China												
	Copper River	Weekend/multiday	705	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Combination	Medium	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●		190
	◀ Woodpath	Day/weekend	600	As above	Mid-ankle	Leather	High	●1/2	●●	●●●		210
Garmont China/Italy												
	◀ Kiowa	Day	495	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	High	●	●●	●●●		180
	Vegan Hi	Weekend/multiday	585	As above	Above ankle	Synthetic	Medium	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●	Contains no animal products	220
	Force full-grain	As above	625	As above	Above ankle	Combination	Medium	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●1/2	Reflective material on back of boot	300
Hi-Tec Vietnam/China												
	◀ Wyoming †	Day/weekend	540	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium	●●	●●	●●●		160
	Transcender	As above	640	Single-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium	●●	●●1/2	●●●	Waterproof lining	190
	Altitude 1 fl	Weekend/multiday	574	Two-layer	Above ankle	Leather	na	na	na	na	As above	220
Kathmandu Italy/Romania												
	Jura Proof	Weekend	555	Two-layer	Above ankle	Combination	Medium	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●1/2	Waterproof lining	280
	◀ Randonnee	Multiday	675	Single-layer	Above ankle	Leather	Medium	●●1/2	●●●	●●●		300
	Randonnee Proof	As above	685	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Medium	●●●	●●●	●●●	Waterproof lining	360
La Sportiva Italy												
	Tundra Gtx	Weekend	580	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	High	●●1/2	●●	●●	Gore-Tex lined	270
	Storm Gtx	Weekend/multiday	660	As above	Above ankle	Combination	Medium	●●	●●1/2	●●1/2	As above	300
	◀ Tibet Gtx Anfibio	Multiday	725	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Medium	●●●	●●●	●●●	As above	380
Montrail China/Korea/Italy												
	Solitude §	Weekend/multiday	595	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium	●●	●●1/2	●●1/2		280
	Torre Gtx	As above	700	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Medium	●●●	●●1/2	●●	Gore-Tex lined	350
	Vercors	Multiday	840	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Low	●●●	●●●●	●●●	Rubber-reinforced toe	400

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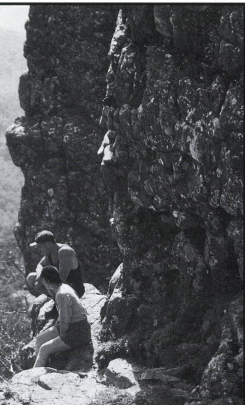
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Rossi Australia												
	Tweed	Weekend/multiday	725	Single-layer	Above ankle	Leather	Low-medium	●●½	●●½	●●●		155
	Tessa § †	Day/weekend	625#	As above	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium	●½	●●½	●●½	Waterproof lining	170
	Eclipse	Multiday	750	Two-layer	Above ankle	Leather	Medium	●●	●●●	●●●½	Good value, practical boot	210
Salomon China/Romania												
	Exit Mid 2000	Weekend	590	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Combination	High	●●	●●	●●		230
	STL-7 † ‡	Multiday	723#	As above	Above ankle	Leather	na	na	na	na	Gore-Tex lined	300
	X-Adventure 7	As above	790	As above	Above ankle	Combination	Low	●●½	●●●	●●●	Combination upper uses rigid plastic	300
Scarpa Italy												
	Lady Trek §	Multiday	680	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium-high	●●½	●●●	●●●½		280
	Trek Wide π	As above	685	As above	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium	●●½	●●●	●●●½	Classic bushwalking boot	280
	SL-M3	As above	860	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Low	●●●	●●●●	●●●½	One of the heaviest boots surveyed	340
Trezeta Italy												
	Trail	Weekend	650	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Combination	High	●½	●●½	●●●		200
	Brixen	Multiday	685	As above	Mid-ankle	Leather	Low-medium	●●●	●●●	●●●●	Great value for features. Gore-Tex lined	300
	Pamir GTX	As above	805	As above	Above ankle	Leather	Low	●●●½	●●●	●●●	Gore-Tex lined	400
Zamberlan Italy												
	Lady Lite	Multiday	615	Single-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	Medium	●●½	●●●	●●½		330
	Hydro Lite	As above	660	Two-layer	Mid-ankle	Leather	Low-medium	●●½	●●●	●●½		360
	Civetta GT	As above	730	As above	Above ankle	Leather	As above	●●●½	●●●½	●●½	Pricy but beautifully made. Gore-Tex lined	490

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent # Weight supplied by the manufacturer na not assessed § women's boot π available in a wide fitting † not seen by author ‡ not seen by referee

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Buy right

There is an infinite variety of foot shapes yet only a limited number of boots. Needless to say, some boots will suit your feet better than others. Despite this, most boot buyers concentrate on the features of the product rather than the fit.

But how do you know when the fit is right? Sometimes it's hard to tell. For example, in trying on several pairs of stiff, new boots you could hardly be blamed for thinking that they all feel pretty uncomfortable!

In any event, get to know the shape of your feet. Most people have one foot larger than the other but very few people can identify which is bigger. Once you have, concentrate on fitting this foot. Wear your bushwalking socks when trying on boots.

Turn the boot upside down and look at the shape of the sole. Some are more curved than others. Some are wider. Look

for a last (see Glossary) which more closely mirrors your foot shape. Ask about multiple widths.

Feet swell and spread in bushwalking boots. After returning from a two-week walk in Tasmania my normal shoes were tight and uncomfortable. If you're tossing up between a larger size or a smaller one, in my experience it is better to err on the side of the larger.

Most people have their own, unique wear pattern. Some people push out the sides of a boot; others erode their outsole in particular areas. If you know how you destroy your boots and the vulnerable parts, check these areas in the next pair.

When trying on boots be aware of tight spots and make sure that your toes are not touching the end of the boot. Don't forget that different lacing techniques can enhance a boot's fit and comfort.

stay dry. Besides, how waterproof is anything that has a huge hole in it!

To check for waterproofness examine the upper material including the number of pieces which comprise the upper and its thickness. Pay close attention to the tongue area (usually the first region to be breached) and the amount of stitching on the boot.

Stitching marks a break (and gap) between two or more pieces of material. That gap is susceptible to leaks—only minimised if the boot has a water-resistant lining: say, Gore-Tex. Don't forget that waterproof linings have stitched seams as well.

Well-fitted gaiters will help to keep your feet dry too.

Durability

All but the day-walk category of boot in this survey should give several years of service—especially if you resole your boots. 'Multiday' boots made of thicker, stronger materials will last longest.



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Ched Towns - Blind mountain trekker and climber

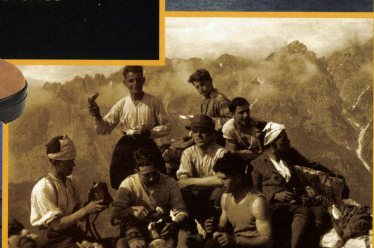
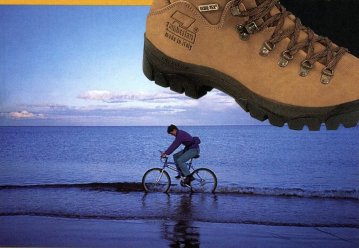
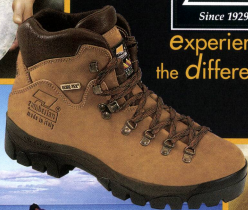
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In considering durability, check the quality of finish and materials. Examine potential trouble spots including—but not limited to—stitching, joins, shoelace attachment points and the out-sole.

Boots with thick, one-piece uppers, hard-wearing 'aggressive' soles, less stitching and fewer joins received higher durability ratings. Some features, such as a rubber rand, give additional protection.

Glossary

Inner-sole. The soft, removable foot bed inside the boot.

Last. The mould on which the boot is built, or the shape of the footprint.

Mid-sole. The mid-sole is the layer between the foot and the hard rubber striking surface (out-sole). The mid-sole provides most of the cushioning in a boot and is made of a variety of rubber compounds.

Upper. The outside of the boot above the bottom of the boot. Materials range from plastic to leather to a swag of trade-name materials.

Out-sole. The durable rubber material on the bottom of the shoe for traction and wear.

Shank. Part of the shoe connecting the heel with the forefoot. Can be made of nylon, steel, carbon fibre and plastic. The shank helps to determine flexibility.

Stability. The ability of the boot to limit lateral or sideways movement of the foot. Look for height around the ankle, a firm heel (push your thumb hard against your heel to test) and plenty of strong lacing points.

Rand. A strip of protective rubber running around the outside of the boot just above the out-sole. Sometimes the rand extends over the toe area.

Value

Value is a subjective measure of quality versus cost. In addition, consider how your boot stacks up against the competition. The cheaper boots are not necessarily the best value—nor are the most expensive boots poor value. If, however, a cheaper boot has virtually the same features, that—to my mind—is better value. Durability, too, is a factor in determining value.

Approx price

The prices in the table are the approximate retail costs based on research in outdoors shops in Melbourne and on prices supplied by some distributors. 

A former shoe fitter with The Athlete's Foot, Scott Drummond is an avid bushwalker. If your boots fall apart while walking Scott suggests that you carry duct tape for on-track repair and a chunk of foam sleeping-mat with a hole cut in it for blister protection. They'll get you home, he says!

This survey was refereed by Stephen Curtain.

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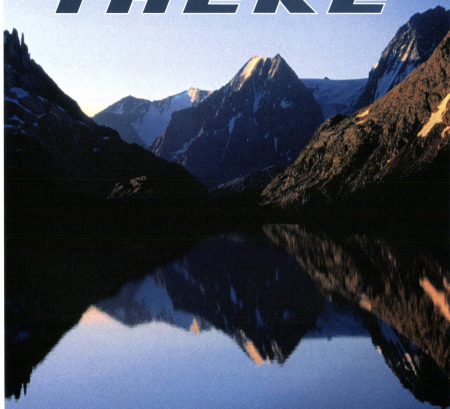
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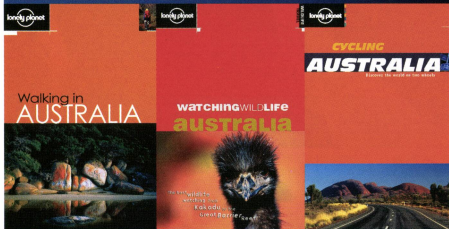
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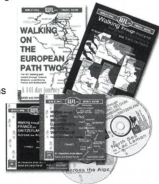
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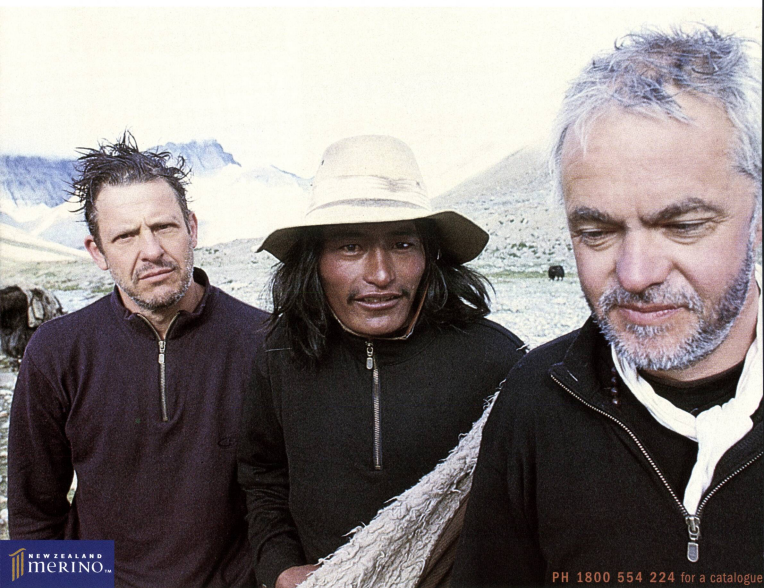
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Thermal tops

Feel the heat, by Greg Caire

ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO, BUYING THERMAL wear or 'next-to-skin' outdoors clothing was a matter of choosing a colour (plain or striped), deciding on one of about four fabrics and handing over your money. Today the choice of products is frightening. There has been an explosion in the range of styles, types and functionality of thermal wear. Many thermal tops now come in a bewildering array of colours, fabric weights and designs, and also function as smart outer garments. Several new products are due for release by various manufacturers in 2001 (indicated with # in the survey table).

As a result, this was a very complex survey. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is comprehensive; however, due to space limitations it was not possible to list all the variations of colour, style and fabric type available from each manufacturer. Where appropriate, other fabric weights, types and styles available have

been included in summary form. It is hoped that this will give readers an idea of the scope of this product.

Style

A long sleeved thermal top and/or a T-shirt-style, short-sleeved top were chosen by each manufacturer for the survey.

Fabric

This column describes the generic name of the garment's material, excluding proprietary names. Types of fabric and the basic properties of each are described in the 'Name game' box.

Odour and thermals

Perspiration and outdoors activities leave thermals susceptible to the growth of bacteria, particularly if a garment is used for an extended period without proper washing. This bacterial growth generates odour, and some materials are more strongly associated with odour than others. Polypropylene, despite being an excellent thermal fabric, has been much maligned for its 'smelliness', which results from bacterial growth on fibres. Textile manufacturers claim that polypropylene can be heated to 95°C without damage or

Thank heavens for thermal underwear!
Paddling the pack ice, Sagavanirktok River, Arctic (Alaska). Fiona Bonella



shrinkage, and thus kill bacteria and greatly reduce odour problems. This is not, of course, practical in the field and on extended trips odour can still be a problem. Many fabrics are treated with anti-bacterial agents to retard odour development (see 'Comments' column in table), or are woven and extruded in different forms to discourage bacteria.

Natural versus synthetic fibres

Manufacturers increasingly offer their ranges in both natural and synthetic fibres. Natural fibres, such as wool and silk, are promoted as being comfortable over a range of temperatures; while they do not have the superior wicking properties of synthetics, they can bind moisture to the proteins in their filaments and effectively keep the wearer dry near the skin. There is also a consumer perception that natural fibres are 'greener' as they aren't produced in a factory. Natural fibres tend (though not always), to be a little more expensive than synthetics.

Buy right

Purpose

Decide on the purpose for your garment: an active layer to keep you warm and dry while walking or skiing, or a static layer for warmth when you're not moving around. Activity generates heat—a thin thermal layer may be better for your needs than a thicker, expedition-weight garment in warmer conditions.

Fit

Some thermal tops fit quite tightly by design; others are draped more loosely over the wearer. With tight-fitting garments, make sure that you have plenty of unrestricted arm movement, and sufficient sleeve length to help to prevent cuffs 'riding up' under other insulating and waterproof layers.

Style

A top which can be worn as a shirt may extend its usefulness; these styles are generally more expensive. The type of seams used and their position around the shoulder area are important. Raglan sleeves (without a shoulder seam) or flat-sewn seams can eliminate irritation spots under your rucksack straps and against your back while you carry a load. The style of neck can also increase the garment's functionality. For example, a zip neck can increase ventilation (depending on the zip's length) and a crew neck can give maximum heat retention around the chest area.

Performance

If the main reason you are buying thermals is to wick moisture away from your body and to keep dry, you'll probably look for different materials than you would if you wanted maximum warmth. Match your choice of fabric to your intended use: high wicking for active sports where you perspire a lot; maximum thermal efficiency for static warmth and the depths of winter.

Thermal tops

	Style	Fabric	Number of fabric weights	Matching pants	Range of sizes	Range of styles	Performance	Value	Comments	Agency price, \$
ActiveEarth Australia										
ActiveEarth #1 f	T	PM	1	No	S-XL	CN, 2T	●●1/2	●●1/2	Expedition-weight fabric	48
ActiveEarth #2 f	LS	PM	1	No	S-XL	CN, 2T	●●●	●●●	As above	50
Cigana Australia										
Tidal #1 f	T	PMm	1	No	M: S-XXL W: 8-16	CN	●●●1/2	●●●	Moisture-management fabric	50
Micro Check #1 f	LS	PI00M	1	No	S-XXL	ZP	●●●	●●1/2		95-99
Columbia China										
Omni-Therm	LS	SM	1	No	XS-XL	CN	●●●1/2	●●		130
Everwarm New Zealand										
Everwarm	T	PP	3	Yes	XS-XXL	CN, V	●●●	●●●●	Will custom-make sizes. Also available in BP, SW	33-45
Everwarm	LS	PE	1	Yes	XS-XXL	CN, PN, R, V, ZP	●●●	●●●1/2	Will custom-make sizes. Also available in PP, SW	35-95
Fairydown New Zealand										
BASE	T	PE	1	Yes	S-XXL	PS, V, ZN	●●●●	●●●1/2	Anti-bacterial finish	45
BASE	LS	PE	1	Yes	S-XXL	CN, R, V, ZP	●●●●	●●●1/2	As above	60
Gondwana Australia										
Gondwana #1 f	T	PE	1	Yes	XS-XXXL	CN	●●●	●●●	Spun PE	32
Gondwana #2 f	LS	PE	1	Yes	XS-XXXL	CN	●●●	●●●	As above	35
Helly Hansen Portugal										
Lila f	T	PP	2	Yes	S-XXL	CN	●●●	●●●	Special filament fibre PP (low odour)	45-75
Lila f	LS	WPB	3	Yes	S-XXL	CN, ZP	●●●	●●●	Also available in PP	100-110
Icebreaker New Zealand										
Skin	T	SW	1	Yes	M: S-XXL W: XS-L	CN, 2T, V	●●●1/2	●●●1/2	Non-itching wool	55-75
Bodyfit	LS	SW	1	Yes	M: S-XXL W: XS-L	CN, PN, 2T, V, ZP	●●●●	●●●●	As above	80-120
IZWool Australia										
IZWool	LS	SW	1	Yes	XS-XXL	CN, 2T	●●●●	●●●	Non-itching wool	70
Karrimor UK										
KSB-ABL f	T	PE	2	Yes	M: S-XL W: 10-16	CN, ZN	●●●1/2	●●●		49
KSB-ABL f	LS	PE	2	Yes	M: S-XL W: 10-16	CN, ZN	●●●●	●●●		55
Kathmandu New Zealand										
Zest	T	PE	2	Yes	S-XL	CN	●●●1/2	●●●●	Anti-bacterial finish. Also available in PP	20
Bi-Polar	LS	PE	1	Yes	S-XXL	CN, ZP	●●●1/2	●●●●	As above	36
Macpac New Zealand										
GeoCrew	LS	PPA	3	Yes	XS-XL	CN	●●●1/2	●●●1/2	Also available in SW	45-52
Model T	T	PE	3	Yes	S-XL	CN	●●●1/2	●●●1/2	As above	75-90
Mountain Designs New Zealand										
Mountain Designs	T	PP	1	Yes	XS-XL	CN	●●●	●●●		32
Mountain Designs	LS	PP	3	Yes	XS-XL	CN, ZP	●●●	●●●		22-55

Thermal tops continued

	Style	Fabric	Number of fabric weights	Matching pants	Range of sizes	Range of styles	Performance	Value	Comments	Approx price, \$
Paddy Pallin Australia										
Paddy Pallin	T	PE	1	Yes	M: S-XL W: 10-16	CN	●●● 1/2	●●●	Anti-bacterial treatment	65
Paddy Pallin	LS	PE	1	Yes	M: S-XL W: 10-16	CN, ZN	●●● 1/2	●●●	As above	70-85
Patagonia USA										
Capilene	T	PE	2	Yes	M/U: XS-XXL W: S-XL	CN, ZP	●●●●	●●● 1/2	Anti-bacterial treatment	59-65
Capilene	LS	PE	6	Yes	M/U: XS-XXL W: S-XL	BN, CN, PN, ZP	●●●●	●●●●	As above	65-149
Sherpa China										
Sportztherm	T	PE	1	Yes	XS-XXL	CN, 2T	●●●	●●● 1/2	High-wick PE. Also available in PP	27
PCD III	LS	PP	1	Yes	XS-XXL	CN	●●●	●●● 1/2	Soft-feel PP. Also available in PE	30-35
Silk Body China										
Silk Body # 1	T	SI	1	Yes	S-XL	CN, V	●● 1/2	●●●		50
Silk Body # 1	LS	SI	1	Yes	S-XL	CN, V	●● 1/2	●●●		60
Snowgum New Zealand										
Hot Bods	LS	PP	1	Yes	S-XL	CN	●●●	●●●	Very small sizes	35
WEFT New Zealand										
Thermady #	T	PP	1	Yes	XS-XXXL	CN, PH, V, ZP	●●●	●●● 1/2		20-38
Polarstat #	LS	PE	2	Yes	XS-XXXL	CN, PH, V, ZP	●●●	●●●		34-68
Wilderness Wear Australia										
Silkweight	T	PE	1	Yes	S-XL	CN, V	●●● 1/2	●●● 1/2	Flat-sewn seams. Raglan sleeves	30-35
WickDry	LS	PP	2	Yes	XS-XXXL	CN, V, ZP	●●● 1/2	●●●	As above. Also available in CF, PE, PMm and SW	40-60
World Surplus USA										
Nomex f	LS	PO	1	Yes	S-L	PN	●●●	●●●●	Fire resistant	25

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent # New for 2001 Style: T-shirt, LS long-sleeved Fabric: BP brushed polypropylene, CF chlorofibre, PE polyester, PMf polyester microfleece, PMm polyester micromesh, PO polyamide, P100M polyester 100 weight fleece microfibre, PP polypropylene, PPA polypropylene acrylic, SI silk, SM stretch microfleece, SW superfine wool, WPB wool/polypropylene blend Range of sizes: Men's, Women's, Unisex Range of styles: BN button neck, CN crew neck, PN polo neck, PS polo shirt, Round neck, 2T two-tone colours, V-neck, ZN zip neck, ZP zip polo † not seen by author ‡ not seen by referee The country listed after the manufacturer/brand name is the country in which the products are made

Range of styles

Features which may extend the usefulness and functionality of any one garment (zip necks, flat seams, raglan sleeves, and so on) have been listed here or under 'Comments'.

Performance

A subjective rating has been given to each product's performance, based on a number of factors assessed by the surveyor. Criteria include warmth, odour resistance, speed of drying, moisture-wicking ability, moisture absorption (of fibres), and overall fit and comfort. It's a very general assessment and is meant only as a guide.

Value

This is a rating for value based on price, performance and functionality. It is subjective, based on a combination of factors perceived by the surveyor.

Comments

Some of the garments described are available in fabrics other than those presented for the survey. Where this is the case, the alternative fabrics are summarised in this column.

Price

Prices described are recommended for retail as supplied by manufacturers. 🇨🇦

Name game

The list of proprietary fabrics used in thermal tops is extensive. There are sufficient data for a dozen PhD theses when describing the pros and cons of each material, so a much reduced summary of the generic fabric types with their basic descriptive names has been used. Many proprietary names exist for the synthetic fabrics, but only the substance from which they are made has been described in the table. This may be woven in different ways, or treated with other materials to enhance particular properties. Several basic fabrics are used, and these can be divided into synthetics and natural materials. Though blends of the two types are used, such as polypropylene and wool, only one garment in this survey was a natural/synthetic blend.

Silk

One of the earliest fabrics to be used as a lightweight body layer. Very light and compact.

Wool

New, superfine wools are becoming very common thermal layers. The fine wools virtually do not produce 'prickle' though a sensitive wearer will still feel the difference between wool and other fabrics. Wool is a natural fire retardant.

Polyester

Generally has a softer feel than polypropylene but absorbs more moisture. Many proprietary fabrics are polyester-based. Polyester comes in many different weights, weaves and filament types to enhance its properties. Some of the more expensive thermals are polyester-based. Most fleece and mesh-knit thermal fabrics are polyester-based.

Polyamide

Used by the US air force for its thermal and fire-resistant properties, this unusual material is used in one of the products surveyed. Bulkier and heavier than other synthetics.

Polypropylene

The least water-absorbing of all the fibres, and usually the cheapest. It was the first thermal fabric used and is an excellent performer in terms of wicking. It is associated with odour problems, though these can be reduced by washing in hot water (up to 95°C without shrinkage, according to manufacturers). Can be woven in different ways to give a softer feel against the skin.

Chlorofibre

A polyvinyl chloride (PVC) derivative. It wicks moisture effectively and is an efficient thermal insulator.

CoolMax

Used in some T-shirt styles, this fabric has excellent wicking properties and makes an effective warmer-weather fabric.

Starting as a wide-eyed schoolboy in the Blue Mountains near Sydney, for two decades Greg Core has been climbing, XC skiing, cycling and sea kayaking in various parts of the world. The happiness and warmth of poor, rural peoples around the globe including Tibetan nomads and Brazilian peasants are a constant source of inspiration.

This survey was refereed by Stephen Patrikios.

Fast and Light

The new Primus Himalaya VariFuel (LFS 3278) lightweight stove runs on liquid fuels like kerosene, white spirit and other petroleum based fuels. The low centre of gravity gives extra stability and the anti-slip pot supports allow the pot to sit firmly on the stove, even when the ground is uneven. Output: 2800 W. Weight 424 gm.

The Liquid Fuel System

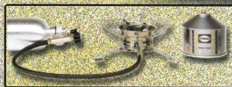


Also available a range of light weight stoves and lanterns which use economical LP gas cartridges, and feature piezo ignition.



The Multi Fuel System.

The PRIMUS Himalaya MultiFuel (MFS 3288) (left) runs on economical LP gas cartridges as well as on liquid fuels like kerosene, white spirit and other petroleum based fuels. The best of both worlds!



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- All include a Stuff Sack and Repair Kit.
- Spares: Stuff Sacks, Chair Kits and Repair Kits are available.
- "Warmth Plus Deluxe and "Warmth Plus Deluxe - Lite" models also available.
- CFC free foam..
- Models with built-in pillows also available.
- Cold weather safe valve.
- US patented and others patent pending.

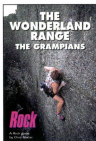


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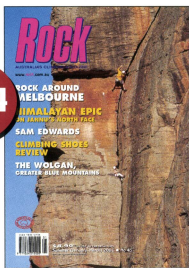
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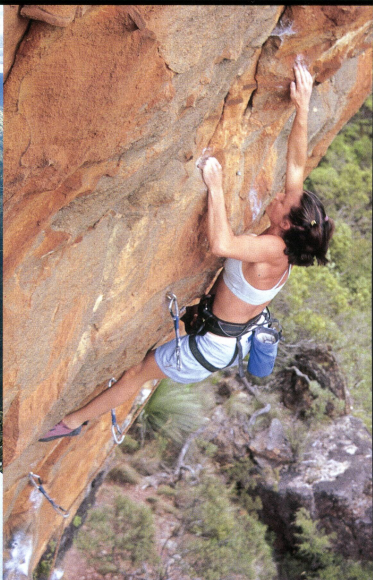
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Material news

WL Gore & Associates has made a number of changes that will affect the availability of **Gore-Tex** and **WindStopper** garments in Australia and New Zealand. While there will be fewer manufacturers of Gore-Tex and WindStopper products in the region, the company claims that the number of garments made from these fabrics will increase.

Most of WL Gore's range, including its latest fabric, Gore-Tex XCR, will be available from **Macpac Wilderness Equipment**, **Mountain Designs** and **Paddy Pallin** from March 2001. Other WL Gore garments will be available from other suppliers including **Fairydawn**, **Kathmandu** and **Snowgum**. Furthermore, a selection of Gore-Tex garments from overseas manufacturers such as **Arc'teryx**, **Marmot** and **Mountain Hardware** will be available in the region.

The outer shell of this Rick White Signature Series sleeping-bag is made from Epic fabric, said to have better breathability and a more durable water repellency than fabric previously used for similar applications.



Rick White Signature Series, Macpac and **Patagonia** are using a new fabric called **Epic** as the outer (shell) fabric on selected technical sleeping-bags. Epic, made by **Nextec**, uses a process called encapsulation which is claimed to achieve better breathability and a more durable water repellency than fabric previously used for similar applications. The theory behind encapsulation is that fabrics have three sides: a front, a back and an inside. Encapsulation entails taking 100 per cent polyester microfibre and enclosing them with ultrathin, silicon-based polymer film, thereby creating a durable, breathable barrier between the fibre bundles. This process is said to create a soft, lightweight, compact and durable fabric that repels water and is breathable.

Reflex action

In the **waterproof jackets** survey in *Wild* no 79 it was incorrectly stated that **Macpac's Rain Jacket** and **Silhouette** have painted coatings. Both of these models use **Reflex**, which is a waterproof, breathable laminate fabric. (Laminated coatings are generally considered to be more effective and durable than painted coatings.)

Macpac's Silhouette jacket is made from Reflex, a waterproof, breathable laminate fabric.



No-fuss footwear

The new Australian-owned-and-designed **Gordon All Terrain Bunya sandal** is said to have the design strength and quality to go the distance in Australia's outdoors, without the big-dollar price tag! Features include a full 'cage' of two-ply, rot-proof nylon webbing straps for high foot security (most of its straps are continuous through the foot-bed, making them more durable); adjustable Velcro straps for varying foot widths; an aggressive-grip rubber outsole; and a low-water-retention insole. Available in men's UK sizes 7-12. For more information, telephone **Minian Pty Ltd** on (07) 5478 9848. RRP \$59.95.



The Gordon All Terrain Bunya is an inexpensive, Australian-designed sport sandal.

Snow footin'

The **Yowie**, the only flexible **snowshoe** on the market, is now available in large and medium sizes. New design features include Teflon-coated Velcro to repel ice/water, a buckle on the ankle strap to give greater security, engineer-



The flexible Yowie snowshoe has several new design features, including improved cleats.

ing-grade plastic to increase the shoe's life expectancy, and improved cleats. RRP \$180. Australian manufacturer **Yowie Snowshoe Co** is making a limited number of snowshoes available to non-profit organisations. For more information, phone (03) 9397 2115.

Knick-Knacks

* **Grant Minervini Agencies** has informed us that some of the **SweetWater** filter systems and parts have been discontinued by **Cascade Designs Inc** (CDI). The products concerned are the **Guardian Plus Purifier**, the **Guardian Plus Combo Pack**, the **Global Water Express**, and the **VirialGuard Cartridge**. Due to an inability consistently to remove 99.99 per cent of viruses, SweetWater took the Guardian Plus VirialGuard iodinated resin-based cartridge off the market. CDI and independent laboratory testing have confirmed these results.

* According to a consumer notice prepared by **Outdoor Agencies** in June 2000, **Recovery Engineering (PUR)** in the USA has advised retailers to suspend sale of its **StopTop carbon cartridge**; **Carbon Refill packs**; and **Voyager, Scout and Explorer water purifiers** which include the **StopTop** as an accessory until the carbon granules used in the StopTop can be replaced. (The Voyager and Scout purifiers received good—excellent ratings in our survey in *Wild* no 77.)

The StopTop is an accessory sold separately—and with—the purifiers to remove chemicals including iodine purification agents from treated water and thereby improving its taste. However, testing has revealed variations in the grade of carbon used in the StopTop which could interfere with PUR purifiers' ability to kill viruses in outdoors (untreated) water. Tests showed continued effectiveness against cysts and bacteria.

Consumers who already own PUR purifiers can still use them and get protection against viruses (as well as cysts and bacteria) simply by taking off the StopTop accessory before use. For more information, contact your nearest PUR retailer.

* **Katadyn Australasia** has bought **Exstream**, which it claims is the **bottle filter** market leader; a bottle filter will be available from March this year. For more information, phone **Katadyn** on (02) 4227 2473. ☛

Products (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send them to the Editor, *W&W*, PO Box 415, Pahrans, VIC 3181.

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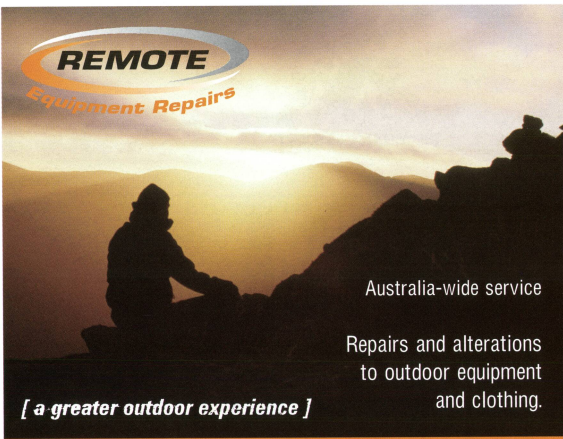
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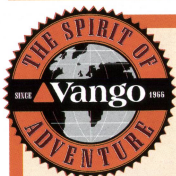
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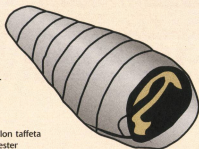
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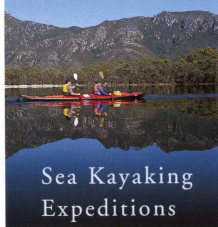
Fabric:
Outer
Inner

40D 240T Ripstop nylon taffeta
Soft-hand Micro polyester

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Fill weight (gm/m ²):	1 x 100	2 x 100 top 1 x 100 bottom	2 x 150 top 1 x 100 bottom	2 x 175 top 1 x 150 bottom
Temp rating (°C):	0	-5	-10	-12
Comfort rating:	+25 to +5	+25 to 0	+15 to -5	+25 to -8
Length (cm):	225	225	225	225
Chest width (cm):	80	80	80	80
Foot width (cm):	50	50	50	50
Pack size (cm) L x diam:	22 x 14	27 x 16	28 x 16	29 x 18

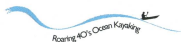
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Wilderness wins

A few years ago the Wilderness Society (TWS) decided to make some dramatic changes to the way it campaigned for wilderness protection. Already there are significant achievements to show for their efforts. Some highlights so far:

- * *WildCountry* is TWS's vision for protecting Australia's natural heritage into—and beyond—the twenty-first century. It is big picture thinking (like its American counterpart, the Wildlands project): an audacious, positive and visionary environmental plan beyond any previously attempted in Australia. A primary *WildCountry* goal is to produce an Australia-wide, comprehensive system of interconnected, core-protected areas, each surrounded and linked by lands managed under conservation objectives. It is hoped that TWS will be able to work with the Wildlands team to gain support from US foundations for the \$A3 million budget required for the first three years of the project.

- * An historic agreement between the Queensland Timber Board and three leading conservation groups (including TWS) brought an immediate finish to old-growth logging in south-east Queensland and the addition of 425 000 hectares of highly biodiverse forests to the reserve system. Under the agreement, the native forest logging industry will make a complete transition from logging public native forests to hardwood plantations.

- * TWS, together with other State and regional groups, played a vital role in the Carr Government decision to protect 324 000 hectares of biodiverse coastal, escarpment and western slopes forest and woodlands.

- * Another highlight was receiving an award from the Australian Humanitarian Foundation. This is the first year that the foundation has included an environment category and TWS won the organisation award.

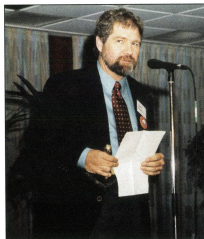
- * The book *Forest-friendly Building Timbers* became a best seller despite the wood-chip industry's attempt to have it banned. Now the sequel is close to completion; a specialised Internet page named the One Stop Timber Shop. This will provide advice on alternatives to timber from native forests and where to get them.

- * In New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria, TWS has been working with local councils to en-

courage 'ethical purchasing' and alternatives to using native-forest timber.

- * TWS has also helped to establish ethical shareholder groups in major companies that participate in wood-chipping and uranium mining.

- * In conjunction with other environment groups and traditional owners, TWS has been pressing for greater protection of Cape York. In 1996 this led to the signing of the Cape York Heads of Agreement between Aboriginal representatives, environment



The National Campaign Director of the Wilderness Society, Alec Marr, accepting an award from the Australian Humanitarian Foundation on behalf of the organisation. The Australian Humanitarian Foundation collection

groups and graziers. This work was recognised in 1997 with a national reconciliation award. Approximately one million hectares of unviably cattle properties have been acquired by the Beattie Government and are expected to be allocated as National Parks or Aboriginal freehold land with conservation agreements within six months. Included is the protection of Shelburne Bay—and delivering land justice for its traditional owners.

- * Perhaps the greatest morale booster for the organisation is the continuing success of its Wilderness Defenders programme, which has substantially increased its membership and supporter base.

Virginia Young

Blue Mountains over the World Heritage line—now for the Alps

In November 2000, at the World Heritage Committee meeting in Cairns, the million hectare plus Greater Blue Mountains Area in NSW finally made the World Heritage List—Australia's 14th site.

The proposal for a World Heritage nomination was developed by the Colong Foundation for Wilderness (CFW) in 1989.

What many believe should have been a straightforward matter became an 11-year slog against opposition both from within Australia and abroad. In the process the grounds for listing (see *Wild* no 70) were narrowed considerably and it was inscribed only in relation to the significance of its eucalypt-dominated vegetation for the understanding of evolution and biodiversity.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) initially said that the eucalypts were not internationally significant. When it became clear from statements by eminent international botanists that this was untrue, it recommended that the Blue Mountains be included in a serial nomination comprising areas from all over Australia sampling the full range of eucalypt diversity.

Australia insisted on a stand-alone nomination and the Blue Mountains acceptance on this basis will, it is hoped, have paved the way for other prominent eucalypt-based nominations.

Footnote: In 1993 *Wild* provided much of the money for an Australian Alps World Heritage campaign run by the Australian Conservation Foundation and other organisations.

Geoff Masley

Alarming decline in bird numbers

National bird conservation organisation Birds Australia is reporting drastic declines in many of the nation's species. This news follows a recent report by biologists Stephen Garnett and Gabriel Crowley showing that one in five of Australia's native birds are now under threat.

Figures emerging from the Bird Atlas, a comparative study of distribution and abundance produced by Birds Australia and now in its third year, show that wedge-tailed eagles, brolgas, superb lyre-birds and scarlet robins have all declined in numbers by 30–40 per cent. The number of emus has declined by over 50 per cent in recent decades.

Similar statistics are emerging of other bird species and Birds Australia says that we have reached a state of emergency. The current situation is akin to the wholesale destruction of half of our bird species in many cases', says Birds Australia Councillor and Australian National University Professor Henry Nix.

These declines are rapid and could spiral out of control unless we address them immediately. The loss of habitat is the most significant factor in all the declines but there are things we can do to turn the situation around', he said.

As a result of Birds Australia's on-the-ground projects, numbers of the orange-bellied parrot and red-tailed black cockatoo,

probable in a 'high tech' age concerned about global warming. Incredibly, there is now every probability that large volumes of native forest wood will be burned for electricity generation in the name of 'renewable energy' and as part of Australia's greenhouse gas abatement programme!

This step has been facilitated by the passage of the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000* (Cwth). Supported by both Federal Labor and Liberals, the Act obliges electricity companies to produce two per cent of their energy from renewable sources and contains penalties for failure to comply. Wood will be a less expensive option than solar or wind power generation. In NSW alone, the government estimates that up to 2 million tonnes of wood could be burned each year. (NSW at present exports around 500 000 tonnes of wood-chips a year.)

Up to nine power stations to burn 'biomass'-containing wood have been proposed for Queensland. Eight proposals have come forward in Victoria, three in NSW and three in Tasmania. Burning native forest wood for power generation is at

The proposed road would run to the west of the Coolool National Park, and could threaten the habitat of the rare Coxon's fig tree parrot and the endangered powerful owl. Design specifications for the road—originally suggested as a low-key tourist route—indicate suitability for logging and sugar-cane haulage vehicles. Both activities would have an adverse impact on the nearby National Park. The road would open up this region for other development unsuitable for the area.

▲ Act now

You can voice your opposition by writing to the Minister for Transport, Stephen Bredhauer, GPO Box 2644, Brisbane, Qld 4001. More information can be obtained from the Sunshine Coast Environment Council; phone (07) 5441 5747.

Gallipoli battlefields

The Mineral Policy Institute informed us in November 2000 that Turkish villagers were marching to the battlefields of Gallipoli to protest against an Australian-owned mine in western Turkey.



Preliminary figures indicate that the brolga has declined in number by 30–40 per cent. Dave Watts

that had dropped perilously in previous decades, are now holding steady. Other projects have increased the numbers of Kangaroo Island's glossy black cockatoo by 39 per cent to 250 in the past five years', he said.

Birds Australia's Gluepot Reserve, near Renmark in South Australia, has been the site of several successful research and recovery programmes including the recent black-eared miner relocation. The last significant remnant of Murray Mallee, it was purchased three years ago by members of Birds Australia in just six weeks after the owner indicated that burning was the only solution for the marginal sheep station.

▲ Act now

Donations to the Birds Australia Endangered Species Appeal may be made at any branch of the National Australia Bank, by visiting www.birdsaustralia.com.au or by phoning 1300 730 075.

Burning forests for power and charcoal

Regional Forest Agreements now seem set to facilitate new destructive industries concerned with burning native forests for power generation or smelting. Many forests unsuitable for saw-logging or export wood-chipping may now head off to the furnace.

Returning to the dark ages for our lighting and heating seems incongruous and im-



Native forest are in shorter supply than electricity.

Help us stop wood-fired powerstations.



The Wilderness Society has produced a postcard for its campaign to prevent native forests being burnt for power and charcoal. 'Burning threatened species' habitat is an outrageously high price to pay to turn on a light!' The Wilderness Society

least as bad for greenhouse, and far more damaging for wildlife, than burning coal!

▲ Act now

To get free postcards (see above), phone Sonia Black at TWS on 1800 030 641.

Sunshine Coast road

Environmentalists on Queensland's Sunshine Coast are lobbying to prevent the construction of a major road between Boreen Point and Tin Can Bay.

The cyanide-using gold-mine is near the town of Bergama, which is very close to several active fault zones. Earthquakes commonly occur in Turkey, and the likelihood of one greatly magnifies the risks and increases the chance of a disastrous cyanide spill.

In 1999 the Turkish High Court ordered the mine to cease operation due to the extreme threat it posed to the water-supply of Bergama and surrounding agricultural land. Recently, however, the Turkish Government overturned the court decision,

sparking renewed protest at the reopening of the mine.

▲ Act now

Help to protect the land and water-supply of the people of Bergama; call 1800 005 540 or visit www.mpi.org.au/support to give a tax-deductible donation.

WOOD-CHIPS

* Thirteen **Marine National Parks** have been recommended for **Victoria** by the **Environment Conservation Council**. The proposed parks are in the following areas: Discovery Bay (west of Portland), Twelve Apostles, Point Addis, Port Phillip Heads, Yaringa (south-west of Tooradin), French Island, Churchill Island (Westernport Bay), Bunurong (south-west of Inverloch), Wilsons Promontory, Corner Inlet (north of Wilsons Promontory), Ninety Mile Beach, Point Hicks and Cape Howe.

▲ Act now

Help to ensure that the recommendations are adopted in full. (It is expected that they will be debated in State Parliament in May.) Lend your support to the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA); phone (03) 9650 8296 or visit www.vnpa.org.au

* According to the **VNPA**, many fish species are threatened by excessive fishing pressure, wasteful fishing practices, environmental degradation and poor management. Consumers can make a positive contribution to conserving fish species by choosing fish from an ecologically sustainable source. The VNPA has developed a **good fish buying guide** for selected species fished from waters around south-east Australia. *Best choice:* southern calamari, albacore tuna (locally caught), sand flathead and southern garfish. *Could be better:* John Dory, pink ling, jackass morwong and black bream. *Last resort:* school shark (many different types of shark are sold as 'flake'—ask what you're eating), orange roughy, dredged commercial scallops and gemfish.

* Queensland's Parliament passed amendments to the **Vegetation Management Act 1999** on 7 September 2000 according to the November newsletter of the CFW. (See reports on **land clearing in Queensland** in *Wild* nos 78 and 79.) The changes remove protection for vegetation classified as of 'no concern' (where 10–30 per cent of original cover remains) on freehold land. Based on government figures, the seriously weakened Act is likely to reduce Queensland's present clearing rate of 400 000 hectares a year by only 20 000 hectares a year.

* The **Wombat State Forest** around Daysford in central **Victoria** is on the

brink of exhaustion; a map compiled from State Government documents reveals the extent of **overlogging**, the *Sunday Age* reported on 17 December 2000. The map shows that about 80 per cent of the area available for logging has already been cut over since 1974. There are few blocks left with large trees of saw-log quality to sustain the region's eight remaining sawmills. While local timber workers face a bleak future, the overlogging has also put the survival of endangered species on the line; about 30 per cent of Australian birds and animals rely on old trees with hollows.

* The forest around the highest waterfall in **Victoria's Otway Ranges** has won a reprieve from being clear-felled in the 2000–01 summer, Melbourne's *Age* reported on 29 January 2001. Logging the forest around **Sabine Falls** has been deferred pending a review by the community-based Regional Forest Reference Group for the Otways.

* **Mt McKay**, near Falls Creek, was restored to **Victoria's Alpine National Park** from 24 January 2001, the *Age* reported on that day. The Bracks Government legislated last year to reinstate the summit of Mt McKay to the National Park, reversing a decision of the former Kennett Government to allow for the development of ski runs.

* A **wildlife-trade monitoring programme** is urging the public to help to stop the illegal trade in Australia's native wildlife by reporting any unusual or suspicious activities to authorities. **TRAFFIC**, a programme of the **World Wide Fund for Nature** and the **World Conservation Union**, has asked that wildlife authorities or the police be notified of activities such as cars driving slowly along roads in remote areas at night with headlights turned off and a spotlight scanning the road, and people methodically turning over boulders and collecting reptiles.

* About six per cent of the remaining virgin forest in **Sabah, East Malaysia**, will be replaced by a huge **pulp- and paper mill** and a massive monoculture **plantation**. The \$US1.1 billion project will necessitate the felling of 240 000 hectares of natural forest, which will be replaced by the mill and a plantation of black wattle trees. By 24 October 2000, 12 000 hectares of the land of the proposed project had already been logged without a single environmental impact assessment being done.

▲ Act now

Email the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad (at epu@jpm.my). Request the State Government of Sabah and the Federal Government of Malaysia to take the actions demanded by Friends of the Earth (FoE) Malaysia. Please send a copy of your letter to FoE Malaysia at smidris@tm.net.my

* A new scientific study released by **Greenpeace** on 27 October 2000 indicates that the **Pacific Ocean could lose most of its coral reefs** by the end of the century due to **global warming**, and that the damage would devastate the region's fishing and tourism industries. The report, 'Pacific in Peril', says that as early as 2020 the 13 Pacific nations examined could expect serious economic decline due to increased sea temperatures and coral bleaching.

* Scientists and conservationists are trying to stabilise a lily species in the **Grampians, Victoria**, which until 1981 was thought to be extinct according to the *Age* on 29 January 2001. The **Grampian pincushion lily** is a tiny plant that grows only within a few square metres below a single peak in the Wonderland Range, one of the most visited parts of the popular Grampians. In an effort to save the species, the site has been protected from soil loss, rabbits, goats and other animals, and several pincushion lily plants are being cultivated at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne.

* An organisation representing 30 million Japanese consumers has written to the Premiers of NSW, WA, Victoria and Tasmania calling for an immediate halt to the **wood-chipping of Australia's old-growth forests** according to TWS on 14 December 2000. The Tokyo-based **Japanese Consumer Union** has expressed grave concern about the adverse environmental impact of old-growth wood-chipping, and, in particular, its contribution to global warming and the loss of biodiversity.

* **Friends of the Earth founder David Brower** died on 5 November 2000 aged 88 according to an obituary in the *Age* six days later. Brower is described as 'the father of the modern conservation movement and its greatest incorruptible crusader'. In 1952 he became executive director of the **Sierra Club**, an organisation that had originally been set up for hikers in the USA. Under his leadership it became a powerful environmental group. One of his greatest achievements was keeping dams out of Arizona's **Grand Canyon** in 1967. Two years later Brower formed the more radical Friends of the Earth, coining the motto 'think globally, act locally'. In his younger days Brower also pioneered major North American rockclimbs.

* A **forest protector** who sat up a tree for a week during anti-logging protests in northern **Tasmania** was fined \$7000 in the Launceston Magistrate's Court in October 2000. **Neil Smith** sat up the tree during protests against logging on Mother Cummings Peak near Deloraine two years ago. 📍

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

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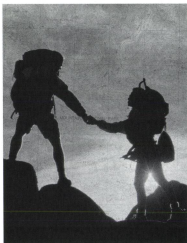
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See walking-boot survey, *Wild* no 28, 1988, pages 61-65

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Walking-guides galore

Day walks by the dozen

A Day in the Bush

by Les Higgins & Tony Rodd (New Holland, 2000, RRP \$21.95).

This guidebook describes 45 day walks in the greater Sydney region. The two authors are a geographer and a botanist, respectively, and their backgrounds are reflected in their choice of walks and in the interesting first part of the book, which describes the land-forms and flora. The walks are widely dispersed around the greater Sydney region including the Blue Mountains. The descriptions follow a well-thought-out standard format and are clear and easy to follow. Included is information about the suitability of the walk for young children and whether it can be reached by public transport. The guidebook is well illustrated with photos and very clear maps. It is highly recommended to those starting out bushwalking and those who want to know more about the wonderful scenery and flora in the bush near Sydney.

David Noble

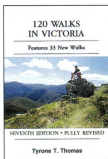


120 Walks in Victoria

by Tyrone Thomas (Hill of Content Publishing, 2000, RRP \$32.50).

After 25 years in print, this seventh edition of the Victorian bible of bushwalking is still essential reading for anyone planning a walking career in the Victorian bush. With almost 100 day walks to suit all ages and abilities and about 20 overnight walks, there is something here for everyone. Old favourites have been revised and 33 new walks thrown in for good measure. Extensive indexing makes the selection of a suitable walk a breeze and brief notes deal with safety, first aid and equipment. For a book to be continuously in print for a quarter of a century and popular with generations of budding bushwalkers is a pretty good record; my only grumble is that the production techniques haven't kept pace with modern trends—the maps are not always as clear as they should be and perhaps the selection of colour photos could be expanded to provide a more balanced illustration of the walks.

JS



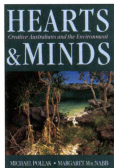
The section on novels explores the importance of the environment in the works of Patrick White (I would have enjoyed a look at *The Tree of Man*) and Xavier Herbert, among others.

Some favourite works of mine were not included: Dick Johnson's seminal *The Alps at the Crossroads* (1974) may have been a treatise on the way forward in the Australian Alps, but it was also an inspiring, illustrated book. Max Angus's *Olegas Truchanas* is a surprising omission.

Perhaps photography (and not just illustrated books) could have been included as a separate, creative discipline in the book. Australia's landscape—and wilderness photography is very fine and has had an enormous influence on the environment over the years (many will remember Peter Dombrovski's photograph of Rock Island Bend as a symbol of the Franklin River campaign). Its exponents set out on lengthy trips and a single image can take a number of days to make. Their photography is not adequately represented in any Australian art gallery but is treasured by millions of Australians in calendars and greetings cards.

It is a joy to debate the contents of a list like this. The book will be of wide interest.

Brian Walters

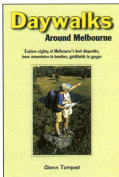


Daywalks Around Melbourne

by Glenn Tempest (Open Spaces Publishing, 2001, RRP \$31.95).

In a dramatic departure from previous rock-climbing guidebooks to Mt Arapiles and the Grampians, both in Victoria, author Glenn Tempest has performed a literary somersault and produced a definitive guide to 80 bushwalks within a day's journey of Melbourne. With most of the walks being 10–12 kilometres or less, this book is meant primarily for family walking groups; each walk is clearly illustrated with a colour map, obviating, in many instances, the need to purchase expensive topo maps. *Daywalks Around Melbourne* is illustrated with colour photos; Tempest has set new standards of graphical presentation for the track notes guidebook market.

John Siseman



Hearts and Minds

by Michael Pollak & Margaret MacNabb (Hale & Iremonger, 2000, RRP \$34.95).

Concern for the environment, and connection with it, have been rich sources of creativity for Australians.

Hearts and Minds seeks to chart the link between creative Australians and the environment. The undertaking is ambitious but worth while.

Hearts and Minds is wide-ranging in scope. It includes novels, non-fiction, illustrated books, magazines (yes, *Wild* has a section devoted to it), films and plays, songs and poems.

Not only is there an analysis of the link between each of the chosen works and the environment, but the authors have also interviewed key people (including Chris Baxter), giving a further dimension to the book.

Earth's Mystical Grand Canyons Australia

by Richard Fisher (Sunracer Publications, 2000, \$US14.95 available by mail order from www.canyonsworldwide.com).

Richard Fisher, an American, is an international canyoneer who has toured the world many times visiting and photographing canyons. This book on Australia's canyons is the latest in a series by Fisher. It includes canyons in the Kimberley and Pilbara areas of Western Australia, in Central Australia and in the Blue Mountains, near Sydney.

Fisher's definition of a canyon is a much broader one than is adopted by the canyoning community in Australia and he includes many of what we would call 'gorges'. The 60 pages of the book are illustrated with

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many fine colour photographs. However, the ones taken in the Bungle Bungles in WA tend to be of the remarkable rock formations rather than of canyons. Fisher had only a limited time in the Blue Mountains and then not in the summer when the wetter and more spectacular canyons are visited. Consequently, his photos taken in that region, where most Australian canyoning is done, are somewhat limited.

Some place-names in the book are misspelt and some claims made in the text are dubious to say the least. This is an attractive book for the canyon enthusiast.

DN

Ice

edited by Clint Willis (New Holland, 2000, \$21.95).

The editor has selected ten Antarctic and four Arctic condensed works primarily covering expeditions between 1879 and 1985. Stories range in style from the eloquent and soul-searching in Barry Lopez's *Arctic Dreams*, which examines a diversity of topics including his relationship with, and response to, landscape, to the drier and more diary-like 1884 account by George DeLong of his voyage in the *Jeannette* and his struggle for survival in the wastelands of Siberia.

Two contrasting tales of modern polar adventures are also included. The 1985 efforts of the hapless Warren Pearson setting sail from Melbourne to spend winter in the Antarctic but sinking in Bass Strait, and the 1984 Arctic rafting adventure of author and environmental activist Edward Abbey only five years before he died.

Despite the bias towards material from Robert Scott's 1911-13 expedition and the Heroic Era of Antarctic exploration, this publication has many entry points into the rich tapestry of polar literature for the reader.

Earlier collations by Willis, *Epic and High*, were reviewed in *Rock* nos 44 and 40, respectively.

Richard Ferguson

Green Power

by Timothy Doyle (UNSW Press, 2000, RRP \$39.95).

The environment 'movement' with its own rich (bio?) diversity continues to surprise observers. Unlike the union movement, it does not have a hierarchy, and it defies easy categorisation. It conforms neither to the left nor the right of the traditional political spectrum. Many of its players are in some formal structure at all.

While *Green Power* is an academic analysis of the environment movement in Australia, it was written by an active participant. Lively anecdotes illustrate the arguments, which are often complex.

Green Power considers non-violence as well as other strategies adopted by aspects of the green movement.

Surprisingly, little space is given to the emergence of the formal, political expression of the environment movement—the Greens. And at times the author is writing without any awareness of work done by

some sectors of the environment movement, such as the work by Bob Burton in relation to the use of public relations to try to eliminate the environment movement from public debates. But perhaps this reflects the difficulty in getting a handle on a movement that expresses itself in so many ways.

The author is at his best when his discussion avoids generalisation and provides specific evidence for the point of view expressed.

The analysis of the Howard Government's abject performance on the environment and of the deals done to ensure the passage of the very nasty Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Bill is Doyle at his best.

This remains the most original look at the complexity of the environment movement

that is available at present.

BW

Strawbale Homebuilding

edited by Alan Gray & Anne Hall (Earth Garden Books, 2000, RRP \$19.95).

Remember *Forest-friendly Building Timbers* (see *Green Pages* and review in *Wild* no 73)?

Here is another book from the same team, again giving practical advice on environmental building.

BW

Trekking and Climbing in Nepal

by Steve Razzetti (New Holland, 2000, RRP \$32.95).

This is a colourful and well-researched text of 25 major treks and climbs in Nepal. While appearing very detailed, it is not a guidebook; the maps are of minute scale and the track notes are extremely

brief. However, this is not a problem as most trekkers use local guides, making detailed notes superfluous. The large number of colour photographs will inspire readers to visit this interesting country. Highly recommended.

John Chapman

A Wild Land video

photography and music by Robert Rankin (Rankin Publishers, 2000, RRP \$29.95 from 1071 3376 9115).

This 46-minute video by photographer Robert Rankin, producer of *Classic Wild Walks of Australia* and *Wilderness Light*, features 'some of Australia's best examples of a pristine landscape' accompanied by tunes or bush sounds. The landscapes, which range from Tasmania's Western Arthurs to Lord Howe Island, are presented as a series of themes. This good-quality video would appeal to anyone with an interest in Australia's wild places, many of which are shown.

Naomi Peters

Walking the Overland Track

by Gary Cobb (Cobb Creative, 2000, RRP \$29.95 from 1071 5476 6596).

An account of a trip along Tasmania's Overland Track in early 2000. With many fast, jerky pans, as well as shaky, hand-held photography, this video comes over as amateurish. Its best feature is the excellent music by Tribal Dance.

JC

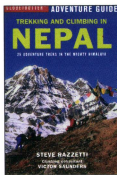
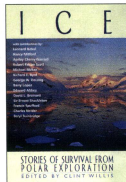
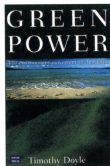
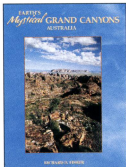
Hinchinbrook Island posters

photographs by Steven Nowakowski (Little Ramsay Press, 2000, RRP \$12.95 each from ramsaypress@ozemail.com.au).

Those readers who have ventured to Queensland's Hinchinbrook Island will appreciate these two beautifully reproduced, panoramic (97 x 34 centimetre) photographs of (1) the Hinchinbrook Passage (taken at 1000 metres from an aircraft) and (2), Little Ramsay Beach with Mt Bowen towering in the distance. The photographer hopes that these posters will aid in the environmental campaigns to protect this fragile region from inappropriate developments. Current threats include the 'Port Hinchinbrook' marina and speed-boats.

Rosie Johnson

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Pahrans, Vic 3181.



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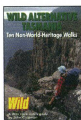
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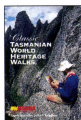
With plastic cover



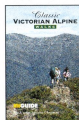
With plastic cover



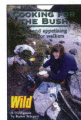
Free in Wild no 64



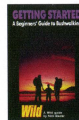
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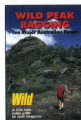
With plastic cover



With plastic cover



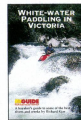
With plastic cover



Free in Wild no 54



With plastic cover (few remain, some slightly damaged)



Free in Wild no 77



With plastic cover



Baying at the moon? (One of Australia's best-known frogs is the green tree frog. However, as with many other frog species, habitat destruction, introduced predators, and so on are taking their toll.)

Ken Griffiths

Wild welcomes slides for this page; payment is at our standard rate. Send them to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

T I K K A



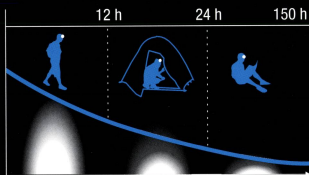
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